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A Conversation with Plato:

**An Enquiry into the Philosophical and Dramatic
Role of the Respondents and Socrates in
Plato's *Republic***

Submitted for the award of PhD

Classical Studies

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Abstract

Plato appears to have used the genre of the philosophical dialogue in a unique way. It could be interpreted as philosophy with dramatic elements, or drama with philosophical arguments, or possibly a mixture of both. This has made it difficult for scholars to gain a clear understanding of Plato and his dialogues.

To date, little attention has been paid by commentators to the dramatic and literary aspects of *Republic* Books II to X. This study has been inspired by the recent debates concerning the dramatic and literary aspects of Plato's dialogues and especially the debates concerning the connections between the philosophical, dramatic and literary aspects of these works. It attempts to add to the scholarship to date by carrying out a detailed investigation of the *Republic* as a whole, rather than focusing primarily on Book I.

This enquiry considers the philosophical and dramatic role of the respondents and Socrates in the *Republic*. Particular attention is paid to the theme of uncertainty and problematising which runs through the dialogue in the different methods of enquiry adopted by Socrates and the respondents.

The examples considered of the input from the respondents, especially Thrasymachus, Glaucon and Adeimantus, together with Socrates' reaction to these, alert the reader to some important connections between the philosophical and dramatic aspects of the *Republic*. These connections would not become evident from a study of the work from a purely philosophical or literary perspective. They help the reader to gain a broader understanding of the work as a whole and what message or messages Plato may have been trying to convey. They also suggest the need for caution in selecting a particular interpretation of the dialogue as a whole.

Introduction

Historical context

- Focus of this study

Plato appears to have used the genre of the philosophical dialogue in a unique way.¹ It could be interpreted as philosophy with dramatic elements, or drama with philosophical arguments, or possibly a mixture of both. This has made it difficult for scholars to gain a clear understanding of Plato and his dialogues. Indeed Aristotle, in his *Poetics* (2, 1447b11), notes the difficulty of categorising the style of presentation adopted by the writers of Socratic dialogues, including Plato. Plato's style of presentation makes it difficult to determine what message he seeks to convey in his works, or according to some, whether he intended to put forward a message at all. It is interesting to compare Plato's style of presentation with that of Aristotle his pupil. The philosophical works of Aristotle are written in thesis style without any dramatic elements.² Although both of these philosophers strongly influenced the western philosophers that came after them, it is Aristotle's style of presentation that is most frequently adopted by present-day philosophers.

To date, little attention has been paid by commentators to the dramatic and literary aspects of *Republic* Books II to X.³ This is because they have not considered *Republic* Book II onwards, to be of much significance from a dramatic and literary perspective, particularly in relation to the role of the respondents in the dialogue as opposed to Book I and earlier works. This study has been inspired by the recent debates concerning the dramatic and literary aspects of Plato's dialogues and especially the debates concerning the connections between the philosophical, dramatic and literary aspects of these works. It has been prompted, in particular, by

¹ There are other examples of philosophical dialogues by Berkeley, Cicero, Hume, Lucian and Xenophon. However, these are less dramatic in style than the dialogues of Plato.

² Examples of these include Aristotle's *Ethics* and *Poetics*.

³ There are exceptions to this which include Yunis (2007, pp. 1-26) who considers the protreptic role of Glaucon and Adeimantus in the *Republic* and Kahn (1993, pp. 131-142) who alerts the reader to some literary, dramatic and philosophical connections between Books I, II, III and IV and later Books of the *Republic*. Also, Rutherford (1995, pp. 206-240) looks at the *Republic* overall in his chapter on the *Republic*. Von Reden and Goldhill (1999, pp. 257-289) consider the story of Leontius in *Republic* Book IV, 439e-440a, together with examples from other works of Plato, in relation to the performance of dialogue. Tarrant (1955, pp. 82-89) considers the dramatic elements of the *Republic* as a whole, along with other dialogues of Plato.

Beverluis' and Blondell's recent works which focus on Socrates and the respondents in the dialogues of Plato.⁴ It attempts to add to the scholarship to date by carrying out a detailed investigation of the *Republic* as a whole, rather than focusing primarily on Book I.

This enquiry considers the *Republic* from a philosophical, dramatic and literary perspective. It pays particular attention to the connections between these aspects of the *Republic* and what they reveal about Plato's intention in writing this dialogue. This study looks at the overall role of the respondents in the *Republic*, together with the role of Socrates.

Background

- Pre-Socratics, sophists and mime

It is worth considering whether any previous or contemporary sources reveal any possible influences on Plato's style of writing. There were many early Greek philosophers, known as pre-Socratics, who came before Socrates and Plato. However, only fragments of their works have survived. Notable examples of these include Heraclitus, Parmenides and Zeno.⁵ Socrates did not produce any written works. Plato is the first Greek philosopher whose works have survived in complete format. The fragments that have survived from the pre-Socratics are expository rather than conversational and they do not appear to have provided a model for the dialogue format adopted by Plato in his works.

The sophists, who were highly influential during Plato's lifetime, feature strongly in a number of his dialogues. However, Plato's portrayal of sophists such as Protagoras and Gorgias emphasises their uneasiness with the dialectical method and their preference to make long speeches. Also, the surviving fragments of their work support this picture.

⁴ Beverluis 2000 and Blondell 2002.

⁵ Barnes (1987) provides a useful study of the early Greek philosophers.

- Greek drama

Plato's dialogues appear to share some common features with Greek drama. The Platonic dialogue reads like a performance, similar to that of a play, with characters interacting with one another in the dialogue form. Furthermore, in the dialogues, the characters of Socrates and the respondents are often brought out strongly and there is a display of tension between the different characters, as in Greek comedy and Greek tragedy. This is especially the case with some of the early and middle dialogues of Plato, for example, *Euthydemus*, *Laches*, *Gorgias*, *Protagoras* and *Symposium*.⁶ In the Platonic dialogues there is often an audience in the background similar to that of Greek drama where the audience is referred to from time to time. Also, the theme of morality is a major focus of both Greek tragedy and the dialogues of Plato.⁷ However, Socrates is essentially not a tragic figure because whatever happens to him he is persistent in regarding himself as morally justified in what he is doing.

Nevertheless, there are important differences between Plato's dialogues and Greek tragedy. In Greek tragedy, there is often a display of moral conflict between the characters as they seek to find a solution to the issue which is being acted out. This conflict can only be resolved through persuasion. However, during the course of the play, it is not always possible to find a resolution. Sometimes it requires drastic measures to be taken in order to resolve the problem. In Plato's dialogues, Socrates and the respondents are seeking to find an answer to the question under discussion. For example, they may seek to establish the nature of courage or justice. Although, the aim is not always fulfilled, the reader is left with the impression that there is an answer to the question under discussion and with further enquiry Socrates and the respondents will eventually find the answer and this is their stated purpose.

Another difference between Plato's dialogues and Greek drama is the depiction of Socrates in these works. In the dialogues of Plato, the character Socrates is generally

⁶ Examples of this include *Protagoras*, 315b, where Socrates describes Protagoras walking in procession with his followers and *Euthydemus*, 276b-c, where Socrates describes the followers of Dionysodorus and Euthydemus as acting like a chorus. I use the terms early and middle dialogues with caution as the chronological order of Plato's works is a much debated issue among scholars, which is beyond the scope of this study. Commentators generally consider the *Republic* to fall within Plato's middle period of writing, with the exception of Book I, which appears to be stylistically early in its composition but not historically so. Nevertheless, whatever its origins, Book I does appear to be an integral part of the *Republic*.

⁷ An example is *The Oresteian Trilogy* by Aeschylus. In this trilogy, there is a focus on the question of justice with the murder of Agamemnon by his wife and her subsequent punishment.

depicted in a good light with some ironic and comic features. By contrast, the character Socrates as depicted in *The Clouds* by Aristophanes is a figure of ridicule. Also, in Plato's dialogues the character Socrates tends to dominate the enquiry unlike the characters in Greek drama, and he is often the narrator 'presenting' the dialogue.

Importantly, the reader needs to bear in mind that, like the authors of Greek drama, Plato is controlling all the action in the dialogues, rather than the characters that feature in these works. It is also notable that Plato puts forward a detailed criticism of poetry and drama (*Republic* Book III, 376c-398b). Here, Socrates argues that poetry and drama would have a negative impact on the education of the guardians in the ideal state and he proposes that it should be censored. As the *Republic* makes clear, for Plato, most drama appeals to the emotions rather than the intellect and is concerned with the projection of images of undesirable feelings and attitudes.⁸

Indeed, Plato's criticism of poetry and drama in *Republic* Books III and X, leaves the reader somewhat confused about Plato's view concerning poetry and drama. This is because many of Plato's dialogues are highly dramatic and Plato makes numerous references to poetry and drama in his works. However, as noted above, there are some significant differences between Plato's dialogues and Greek drama. A key difference is the use to which Plato puts drama: search for the 'truth' as opposed to presentation of what he would consider to be harmful emotions.

- The *Socratic logoi*

Plato was not the only writer on philosophical themes whose works were influenced by and featured the character Socrates.⁹ In addition to Plato, there were three other major writers of Socratic style literature, which is known as *Socratic logoi*, whose works have survived. These include Antisthenes and Aeschines, who were earlier than Plato. They also include Xenophon who was a contemporary of Plato. Importantly, the writers of *Socratic logoi* adopted this style of writing in order to defend the character of Socrates and also for their own individual purposes. They all reproduced what purported to be conversations with the historical Socrates.

⁸ In *Republic* Books II and III Plato does theoretically allow drama of ethically acceptable content - presumably his own. However, in Book X, part 1, Plato appears to rule out all drama in the ideal state. This is an unresolved controversy.

⁹ Clay (1994, pp. 23-47) provides a useful account of the origins of the Socratic dialogue.

Interesting comparisons can be drawn between the *Socratic logoi* of Xenophon and Plato. These two writers produced a significant number of Socratic dialogues, some of which shared the same title, including *Apology* and *Symposium*.¹⁰ In their Socratic dialogues, they both give a defence of the character of the historical Socrates. In these works, the character Socrates is popular and respected. Socrates is also depicted as gifted in conversation and very much in control of the discussion.

However, there are some notable differences between the Socratic dialogues of Plato and Xenophon.¹¹ In the Socratic dialogues of Plato, there is considerable variety in the depiction of the character of Socrates. For example, in Plato's *Gorgias* and *Protagoras*, the character of Socrates appears to be much more confident than the Socrates of the *Laches*. There is much less variety in the depiction of Socrates in the Socratic dialogues of Xenophon. In the early Books of Xenophon's *Memorabilia*, the exchanges between Socrates and the other characters are short. In Book IV of the *Memorabilia*, Socrates is more like the Platonic depiction of Socrates, engaged in lengthier discussions. However, the discussions in Book IV of the *Memorabilia* are still considerably shorter than the Socratic dialogues of Plato. Other important differences include the highly dramatic aspects of the interaction between Socrates and the respondents in Plato's Socratic dialogues and his use of stories, images and myth in works such as *Phaedo*, *Protagoras*, *Gorgias* and *Republic* and Plato uses the elenchus more consistently.

There is a useful example in Xenophon's *Memorabilia*, IV, II, 1-40, which alerts the reader to some of the differences between the approaches taken by Xenophon and Plato in their Socratic dialogues. In this passage, Socrates and Euthydemus enquire into how one gains wisdom. During the course of the discussion it becomes apparent that, contrary to his earlier belief, Euthydemus does not possess wisdom. As in the Socratic dialogues of Plato, Socrates takes the lead in the enquiry with the respondent following his lead. However, unlike the works of Plato, Xenophon does not put any significant emphasis on the character of Socrates or the respondent. Also, Xenophon's respondent does not display any resistance to Socrates in the enquiry.

¹⁰ Bartlett (2006) provides a useful translation with interpretative essays on Xenophon's shorter Socratic writings.

¹¹ Rutherford (1995, pp. 46-56) provides a helpful comparison of the Socratic dialogues of Plato and Xenophon.

Indeed, the reader is left with the impression that a meaningful dialogue has not really taken place between Socrates and the respondent.

At the end of the enquiry into wisdom in *Memorabilia*, Euthydemus admits to being stupid and he departs feeling dejected and disgusted with himself (IV, II, 39). This can be compared with Plato's *Gorgias* where the last respondent, Callicles, ends up being defeated but defiant. Another example is at the end of Book I of Plato's *Republic*, where Thrasymachus displays anger at the end of his encounter with Socrates and Socrates expresses disappointment at not finding an answer to the question under consideration. It is notable that Plato, unlike Xenophon, uses the Socratic dialogue to raise problems associated with the Socratic style of enquiry, in particular, that it does not provide an answer to the question under discussion. Plato also uses the character of the respondent to bring out messages concerning the enquiry. An example of this is the suitability or otherwise of the respondent to partake in the enquiry.

In the middle and later works of Plato, the role of the character Socrates changes with the introduction of positive philosophical theories. In a number of Plato's dialogues, Socrates acts as the narrator, for example in the *Republic*. This is not a feature of the dialogues of Xenophon. Another important difference is that Plato introduced the historical setting into his dialogues, a literary device that was new to the *Socratic logoi*.¹² Significantly, Xenophon's works were not confined to *Socratic logoi*. He also wrote in other genres, for example, historical literature. However, Plato adopted the dialogue form in all his works except the *Apology*.

So, while some possible influences can be traced, the dramatic element in Plato's dialogues appears to be uniquely developed with no predecessors or successors.

¹² Clay (1994, pp. 43-46) considers Plato's introduction of the historical setting to the *Socratic logoi*.

Where this study is situated in the development of scholarship on the subject

Until comparatively recently, the main focus of Platonic scholarship was the philosophical content of the dialogues. This remains a major focus of the work of recent scholarship. Some notable examples of this emphasis include Irwin, Vlastos and Reeve.¹³ Other commentators include Cross and Woosley, Annas and Mitchell and Lucas.¹⁴ There are many collections of articles and critical essays on the *Republic* and the works of Plato, which concentrate primarily on philosophical aspects. Some recent examples of these have been edited by Fine, Kraut and Santas.¹⁵

Irwin, in *Plato's Ethics*, gives detailed consideration to the ethical theories advanced in a number of the earlier, middle and later dialogues of Plato. In the first half of his book, Irwin focuses his attention on some of the earlier dialogues including *Charmides*, *Euthydemus*, *Gorgias*, *Laches*, *Meno* and *Protagoras*. In the second half of the book, he examines some of the middle and later dialogues. In this section, Irwin devotes most of his attention to the *Republic*. But, he also looks at the *Laws*, *Phaedrus*, *Philebus* and *Symposium*.

In his book, Irwin provides the reader with a helpful and thorough examination and interpretation of the key ethical theories outlined in the dialogues of Plato. The range of dialogues that he covers from the earlier, middle and later works of Plato helps the reader to appreciate the theories advanced in these works and the different methods of enquiry adopted by Socrates and the respondents.

¹³ Irwin (1995) which includes a helpful and detailed account of the philosophical theories outlined in the ten books of the *Republic*. Vlastos (1995) gives a useful account of the elenchus method of enquiry as adopted by Socrates in the early and middle works of Plato. Reeve (2006) offers a detailed study of the arguments in the *Republic*. All three of these commentators make a clear distinction between the philosophy of the historical Socrates and the philosophy of Plato. It is worth noting that although these commentators focus primarily on the philosophical arguments in the dialogues of Plato, they also have some interest in the literary aspects of these works, especially Reeve.

¹⁴ Cross and Woosley (1964) provide a useful philosophical commentary on the *Republic*. Annas (1981) offers a detailed study of the philosophical theories outlined in the *Republic*. Mitchell and Lucas (2003) also provide a useful account of the philosophical theories of the *Republic*. Sayers (2002) and Pappas (1996) provide helpful introductions to the philosophical aspects of the *Republic*.

¹⁵ Fine (1999) provides an interesting selection of articles focusing on ethical, political and religious aspects of some of the works of Plato, including the *Republic*. This is one of a pair of volumes edited by Fine. Kraut (1997) offers a set of in-depth critical essays on Plato's *Republic* covering a wide range of philosophical issues. Santas (2006) provides a selection of essays on philosophical aspects of the *Republic*, some of which focus on literary and dramatic aspects of the dialogue.

It is notable that, in *Plato's Ethics*, Irwin focuses his attention on the philosophical content of the dialogues without giving consideration to the literary and dramatic aspects of these works. This is intentional and it ignores the point that many of the dialogues are highly dramatic in style. Also, Irwin appears to work on the assumption that the philosophical arguments put forward in the *Republic* and the other middle and later period dialogues are those of Plato, as opposed to the earlier dialogues which are thought to be representative of the philosophy of Socrates. This is despite the fact that Plato does not feature in any of the dialogues.

Drawing on scholarship from the second half of the last century and in particular the last thirty years, alongside the philosophical approach as discussed above, there has been a growing interest in the literary, dramatic and cultural aspects of Plato's dialogues. This has covered a wide range of issues including consideration of the connections between the philosophical and dramatic aspects of the dialogues. Much of this scholarship has focused on some of the more dramatic early and middle works of Plato including *Laches*, *Meno*, *Protagoras*, *Phaedo*, *Gorgias* and *Symposium*. It has also included examination of the highly dramatic Book 1 of the *Republic*. Examples of recent works published in this area include Beversluis, Blondell, Rutherford and Yunis.¹⁶

There has also been an increase in the number of articles and essays that focus upon the literary, dramatic and cultural aspects of the dialogues of Plato.¹⁷ A considerable amount of this scholarship has focused on specific questions and issues relating to Plato and his dialogues. An important example of this is the collection of articles edited by Klagge and Smith.¹⁸ Other notable examples have been provided by Press.¹⁹

Significantly, the increased interest among scholars in the literary and dramatic aspects of the dialogues of Plato has resulted in some tension being displayed between the

¹⁶ Beversluis (2000), Blondell (2002), Rutherford (1995) and Yunis (2007).

¹⁷ Examples of these include Emlyn-Jones (1999, pp. 123-138 and 2004, pp. 389-405), Johnson (1998, pp. 577-598), and Von Blackenhagen (1992, pp. 51- 68).

¹⁸ Klagge and Smith (1992) provide a useful set of articles which focus on the various methods of interpreting Plato and his dialogues.

¹⁹ Press (1993) provides an interesting selection of essays on interpreting Plato's dialogues. Press (2000) offers a collection of critical essays on the question of who speaks for Plato.

various scholars who take different approaches in interpreting these works, both philosophical and literary.

John Beversluis, in *Cross Examining Socrates*, gives a thorough investigation into nine of Plato's earlier and middle dialogues. He concentrates on the respondents in these dialogues of Plato.²⁰ In his book, Beversluis gives detailed consideration to the exchanges between Socrates and the respondents in these works, including a study of the role of Cephalus, Polemarchus and Thrasymachus in *Republic* Book I. Like Irwin, Beversluis considers the character Socrates who features in the earlier dialogues to be representative of the historical Socrates and the character Socrates in the middle and later works to be representative of the views of Plato. Beversluis gives a strong defence of the respondents who feature in these works. He accuses the character Socrates of manipulating the views of the respondents and being more concerned with winning arguments than seeking to improve the respondents.

I welcome the importance that Beversluis places on the role of the respondents in the dialogues of Plato that he investigates. His detailed study of the role of Cephalus, Polemarchus and Thrasymachus in *Republic* Book I is particularly useful for my study. Nevertheless, it is disappointing that Beversluis does not consider the role of the respondents after Book I of the *Republic*. In my view, the respondents Glaucon and Adeimantus play an important role, philosophically and dramatically, in the course of the enquiry in the remaining books of the *Republic*. This is examined in detail in my study.

Unlike Beversluis, my enquiry examines the role of the respondents in the whole of the *Republic*, together with the role of Socrates. An advantage of this approach is that it can include an investigation into whether there are connections between Book I and the remaining Books of the *Republic*. An example of this, is the role of Thrasymachus in the dialogue overall. Although Thrasymachus does not play an active role from Book II onwards, his input in Book I has a significant influence on the remaining enquiry in the dialogue and in particular Book II. Another advantage of investigating the role of the respondents in the *Republic* overall, is that it can help the reader to gain a fuller appreciation of what Plato sought to demonstrate in Book I, and the rest of the dialogue and why a change of approach is taken from Book II onwards.

²⁰ Beversluis 2000.

In addition to considering the role of Socrates and the respondents in *Republic* Book I and the other dialogues, Beversluis could have considered what Plato was hoping to achieve by including these exchanges in these works. Indeed, some commentators have criticised Beversluis for focusing too much attention on the interchanges between Socrates and the respondents and failing to consider what Plato's intention may have been in presenting these exchanges.²¹ Beversluis seems to be too highly critical of Socrates' handling of the respondents in the dialogue. Some commentators have criticised Beversluis for this approach and have argued that Beversluis fails in his attempt to demonstrate that Socrates mishandles the respondents.²² The above criticisms of Beversluis' account suggest that there may be more to learn from the role of the respondents and Socrates in the dialogues of Plato, including the *Republic* Books II to X.

Blondell, in *The Play of Character in Plato's Dialogues*, provides a detailed and useful study of the literary aspects of a number of the dialogues of Plato with a focus on the play of character.²³ Her enquiry includes a discussion on the *Republic*, where she pays particular attention to Book I. Blondell considers the character of Socrates and the other respondents in the dialogues to be literary devices that should not be taken to be representative of the views of Plato.

This assumption has been challenged by some commentators. In particular, it has been asserted by some that although we cannot assume that the character Socrates and the respondents are speaking directly on behalf of Plato, we can take the overall messages coming out of the dialogues to be representative of the view of Plato. Indeed it is argued by some that the dialogues are dramatic treatises in which Plato seeks to persuade the reader of his philosophical positions.²⁴

In response to this, I would suggest that the attempt to interpret what Plato wishes to convey in the dialogues may prove to be more complex. I support the view that the dialogues are like dramatic treatises. However, even if we take them to be dramatic

²¹ Gill (2001, pp. 297-321) and Poster (2001) see this as a major shortcoming of Beversluis' book, *Cross Examining Socrates*.

²² Brickhouse 2001, pp. 179-182. See also Beversluis' reply to Brickhouse (2002, pp. 493-497).

²³ Blondell 2002.

²⁴ Kraut 2002, pp. 4-8.

treatises, it is not always clear what message Plato seeks to advance in the dialogues. The earlier dialogues often end in *aporia* with no firm conclusion being reached by Socrates and the respondents. This makes it difficult for the reader to determine what philosophical message Plato is seeking to convey in these dialogues, except the fact that they have not found an answer to the question under discussion. There is often a dispute over whether one should 'read' the positive message into the dialogues and the philosophical commentators tend to assume that one can take this approach.

There are other examples in Plato's dialogues which suggest that Plato is not necessarily expecting the reader to accept the philosophical theories advanced in these works. In enquiries such as the *Gorgias* and the *Republic* Book I, although Socrates appears to have won the argument, the respondents Polus, Calicles and Thrasymachus are not convinced of the arguments given by Socrates. The strong reaction from these respondents makes it uncertain as to whether Plato expected the reader to accept the arguments advanced by Socrates. Indeed, at the end of Book I, Socrates admits that he has not been convinced by his own arguments (354a-b). Another example is the introduction of concepts such as the Forms and the immortality of the soul by Plato in a number of the dialogues, which he claims are beyond our grasp intellectually.

Rutherford, in *The Art of Plato*, provides a set of essays which look at the literary aspects of a number of Plato's dialogues, including a useful chapter on the *Republic*.²⁵ It has been argued by some who focus on the philosophical arguments in the dialogues that a study of the literary aspects of the dialogues can lead to a false understanding of the philosophical arguments being advanced.²⁶ In this example, Irwin accuses Rutherford in his book, *The Art of Plato*, of supporting the false claim that the literary aspects of the Platonic dialogue can cast doubt on the belief that in his dialogues Plato is advancing definite philosophical arguments that can be examined independently from the context of the dialogue.

In response to this, I would argue that a purely philosophical study of the dialogues might not give the reader a full appreciation of these works and it could potentially lead to a false conclusion concerning Plato's message. For example, a purely

²⁵ Rutherford 1995.

²⁶ Irwin 1996, p. 346.

philosophical study of the *Republic* could lead the reader to conclude that, in this dialogue, Plato is putting forward the theory of justice in the state and soul and the theory of knowledge, with confidence. However, a study of the *Republic* which includes the philosophical, dramatic and literary aspects, and in particular the input from the respondents, can lead to a different conclusion. The interventions from the respondents at strategic points in the *Republic*, together with Plato's use of stories, images and myth, alert the reader to some problems associated with the theories advanced by Socrates. This puts doubt on the feasibility of these theories and in Plato's confidence in advancing them. This is the focus of my study.

Yunis, in his book chapter *The Protreptic Rhetoric of the Republic*, considers the role of Glaucon and Adeimantus in the *Republic* and he asserts that they play a protreptic role in this dialogue.²⁷ According to Yunis, Plato's depiction of Glaucon and Adeimantus being persuaded by Socrates in the enquiry is intended to move the reader towards accepting the theory of justice as outlined in the *Republic*. I concur with the importance that Yunis places on the role of Glaucon and Adeimantus in the *Republic*. However, I interpret the role played by Glaucon and Adeimantus differently. In my view, Yunis does not take full account of the negative aspects of the speeches and interruptions made by Glaucon and Adeimantus in the dialogue and Socrates' reaction to their input. Unlike Yunis, I argue that the speeches and interruptions from Glaucon and Adeimantus raise problems concerning the theories being advanced by Socrates in the enquiry in the *Republic*. This causes the reader to have some doubts regarding the feasibility of these theories.

The different approaches taken by scholars and the tension displayed between them in the interpretation of the dialogues of Plato can leave the reader somewhat confused. Indeed, these secondary debates can take the reader's attention away from the dialogues themselves. Nevertheless, it is important to be aware of these issues and debates when attempting to interpret the dialogues of Plato as they can influence our approach to the study of Plato and his works. The secondary works to which this introduction refers together with the issues which it raises are considered in more detail in this study. Importantly, these are just some key examples from the extensive volume of literature on the dialogues of Plato. In this study, reference is made to a wide range of secondary sources including articles, books and electronic

²⁷ Yunis 2007, pp. 1-26.

resources, philosophical, dramatic and literary, in the discussion of specific issues in the individual chapters.

The difficulties associated with the various interpretations of the works of Plato suggest that a broad study, which takes account of the philosophical, dramatic and literary aspects of the dialogues may present the best way forward in order to gain a greater appreciation of what Plato wished to convey. This is the approach taken in my enquiry.

How the respondents operate in other dialogues of Plato

In order to gain a deeper understanding of the respondents and the character Socrates and the way they work in the *Republic*, it helps to consider their role in some of the other dialogues and in particular the earlier ones.

In works such as the *Gorgias*, *Protagoras* and *Laches*, there appears to be a strong connection between the individual's character and their ability to conduct philosophical enquiry. For example, in the *Laches*, Nicias is portrayed as reasonably intelligent. But, his self-confidence and reliance on the training he has received from his sophist friend Damon have a negative effect on his ability to enter into philosophical enquiry with Socrates. Laches is portrayed as less intelligent than Nicias and this affects his ability to conduct philosophical enquiry. At the end of the dialogue, Laches and Nicias are annoyed with the outcome of the enquiry and are abusive to each other. In the *Gorgias*, Callicles is portrayed as strong willed, opinionated and aggressive towards Socrates. Nevertheless, at the end of the dialogue, Callicles is defeated by Socrates in the exchange.

There are also some connections between the character and characterisation of the respondents in different dialogues. For example, the character Callicles in the *Gorgias* is similar to Thrasymachus, who rudely interrupts the philosophical discussion and puts forward a strong defence of injustice in *Republic* Book I. At the beginning of works such as *Laches* and the *Republic*, Socrates is portrayed in a good light, as popular and intelligent, with the other characters eager for him to stay and enter into philosophical enquiry. He is also portrayed as lacking in confidence concerning his knowledge of the areas under discussion, for example, courage and justice.

Plato's portrayal of sophists including Gorgias, Protagoras and Thrasymachus tends to be less positive. Although they are portrayed as popular, Gorgias and Protagoras are depicted as proud and overconfident and they are defeated by Socrates in the exchanges. This is because the theories advanced by them are argued by Socrates to be contradictory. The characterisation of Thrasymachus in the *Republic* is also negative. However, it is also complex and it is considered in more detail in this study.

It is also interesting that although Socrates defeats the respondents in the exchanges in these works, the arguments advanced by him are often somewhat contrived, for example, in his exchanges with Calicles and Thrasymachus. In addition, it does not result in Socrates finding an answer to the question that they are enquiring into, for example, the nature of justice. This can encourage the reader to have some sympathy with the characters Calicles and Thrasymachus as portrayed in these works and the arguments that they advance. It can also lead the reader to question the usefulness of the method of questioning adopted by Socrates.

It may help to consider a typology of the key respondents in a number of the works of Plato and in particular some of the earlier and middle dialogues. Some of the respondents fit into more than one category in the typology.

1a. 'Warm-up' characters

These are characters who feature briefly at the beginning of the discussion in some of the dialogues of Plato. It includes Cephalus in the *Republic* Book I and Lysimachus in the *Laches*. These characters do not play a role in the main discussion which follows in the dialogue and the reader is left with the impression that it would be beyond their grasp.

1b. 'Walkover' respondents

This is a feature of much of the earlier works of Plato. The respondents in these works are portrayed as being not particularly bright and they are inexperienced in the question and answer method of enquiry. Examples of these respondents include Ion in the *Ion*, Laches and Nicias in the *Laches* and

Polemarchus in the *Republic* Book I.²⁸ Other examples include Euthyphro in the *Euthyphro*, Hippias in *Lesser Hippias* and Charmides and Critias in the *Charmides*.

Socrates adopts the elenchus method, a form of question and answer, in his exchanges with these respondents.²⁹ These exchanges are friendly and co-operative but they all end inconclusively in *aporia*, with the respondents looking rather foolish.

At the end of these encounters, Socrates is aware that although he has won the argument, the enquiries have failed to provide an answer to the question under consideration. Despite this, the character Socrates does not seek to find an alternative method of enquiry at this point in the dialogues. The respondents do not blame Socrates for the inconclusive end to the enquiry.

2. 'Clever' sophists and rhetoricians

This group of respondents includes sophists and rhetoricians who are gifted at giving long speeches. However, they are inexperienced in the question and answer method of enquiry, which Socrates adopts. They include Gorgias and Polus in the *Gorgias* and Protagoras in the *Protagoras*. Also, Thrasymachus in the *Republic* Book I. Other examples include Euthydemus and Dionysodorus in the *Euthydemus*.

Socrates adopts the elenchus method of enquiry in these exchanges. These respondents provide a stronger challenge to Socrates as they are clever and confident in their ability to persuade their audience. In these exchanges, Socrates displays more confidence in his method of enquiry and is determined to defeat his opponent. Nevertheless, the reader is somewhat surprised with the ease at which Socrates defeats these clever respondents and this makes the exchanges lack credibility. Importantly, like the elenchus exchanges in other early dialogues of Plato, these also end in *aporia*.

²⁸ Notably, the character Polemarchus is depicted in a different manner at the beginning of *Republic* Book V, 449b, where he urges Adeimantus to interrupt Socrates and seek further clarification concerning the arrangements for women and the family in the guardian and auxiliary classes in the ideal state.

²⁹ The elenchus method of enquiry is considered in detail in chapter 1 of this study.

3. Clever hostile respondents

Examples of these include Callicles in the *Gorgias* and Thrasymachus in the *Republic* Book I. Socrates adopts the elenchus method of enquiry in his exchanges with these respondents. The respondents in this group are combative and they are rude to Socrates at times in the enquiries. Socrates is determined to defeat these respondents and he is confident in his approach. At the end of these exchanges, Socrates and the respondents are in disagreement and there is a tense atmosphere. Also, these respondents are not convinced of the arguments put forward by Socrates. As in the other early dialogues, the elenchus enquiry has not provided an answer to the question being enquired into.

There is a difference between Plato's depiction of Callicles and Thrasymachus. The character Socrates is convinced that he has defeated Callicles. However, in the case of Thrasymachus, although he has been nominally defeated by Socrates at the end of *Republic* Book I, it would appear that not even Socrates is fully convinced that Thrasymachus has been defeated.

Importantly, after the exchange with Thrasymachus in *Republic* Book I, Plato introduces two new methods of enquiry. Firstly, Glaucon and Adeimantus adopt the display oration method in Book II, part 1, (357a-367e). Secondly, Socrates adopts the dialectic method, from 368a, Book II, for the remainder of the enquiry in the *Republic*.³⁰

4. Capable and sympathetic respondents

These include Meno in the *Meno* and Cebes and Simmias, Pythagoreans, in the *Phaedo*.³¹ They also include Glaucon and Adeimantus in some parts of the dialectic enquiry from Book II, 368a onwards in the *Republic*.

³⁰ The display oration method is considered in chapter 2 and the dialectic method is considered in chapter 3 of this study.

³¹ The *Meno* is generally considered to be a transitional work between the early and middle dialogues of Plato. The *Phaedo* is considered to belong to the middle works of Plato.

These respondents enter into co-operative exchanges with Socrates. In these works, Socrates and the respondents enter into more complex philosophical enquiries concerning matters such as the immortality of the soul and theories of knowledge. Socrates is confident in these exchanges and he puts forward positive philosophical theories.

5. Capable, sympathetic and challenging respondents

This includes Glaucon and Adeimantus in some key parts of Books II to X of the *Republic* and in particular Books II, V and VI, where their input forces Socrates to justify the theories that he is advancing. It is notable that Socrates takes these challenges, which include speeches and interruptions from Glaucon and Adeimantus, seriously. Indeed, they change the course of the dialogue and they have a negative impact on Socrates' level of confidence.

They also alert the reader to some problems associated with the theories being advanced in the enquiry. They lead the reader to question what Plato is seeking to convey through these challenges from the respondents.

6. Capable, sympathetic respondents who remain silent for extended periods

This includes Glaucon and Adeimantus in some parts of the *Republic* from Book II, 368a onwards and in particular Books III, VIII and IX. It is also a feature of the respondents in much of the later works of Plato including the character Socrates who is a respondent in the *Parmenides* and the three respondents Timaeus, Hermocrates and Critias in the *Timaeus*.

In these enquiries, the person taking the lead in the discussion, who is not always Socrates, is depicted as confident, knowledgeable and very much in control of the enquiry.

One possible theory is that the lack of input from the respondents in these enquiries leads the reader to take on the role of the respondent and to question

the theories being outlined in these works and what message Plato is trying to convey.

Plato's use of characterisation in these works suggests that certain character types are less suited to philosophical enquiry than others. This prefigures the dialectic enquiry in the *Republic* where Glaucon and Adeimantus are chosen, rather than Cephalus, Polemarchus and Thrasymachus, to act as respondents to Socrates from Book II, 368a, onwards. It also prefigures the discussion of the ideal state and soul in *Republic* Book IV where Socrates and the respondents identify three classes of people in the ideal state, guardians, auxiliaries and workers. Importantly, in the ideal state, only the guardians would receive the upbringing and education that would be necessary for philosophical enquiry. Of the respondents who feature in the early and middle dialogues, Glaucon and Adeimantus are the closest in character type to the guardians in the ideal state. This may help to explain why Plato chose them to act as respondents in the dialectic enquiry in the *Republic*.

In these works, Plato appears to have a wider agenda than simply advancing philosophical theories. Through the literary and dramatic elements of these dialogues, including character and characterisation and the input from the respondents and Socrates, Plato also appears to be putting forward messages through the dialogue that are relevant to the philosophical theories advanced, for example about the philosophical life in general and what it would require of the individual.

How the respondents operate in the *Republic*

- Aims of this study

The *Republic* is comprised of ten books. The work is presented in dialogue form.

The main characters who feature in the work are:

Socrates:	Narrator
Thrasymachus:	Third and main respondent in Book I
Glaucon and Adeimantus:	Main respondents from Book II onwards
Polemarchus:	Second respondent in Book I
Cephalus:	First respondent in Book I

Throughout the work, Socrates acts as narrator and the respondents are introduced at various stages of the dialogue. There are also a number of other characters present who form a background audience and remain silent throughout the enquiry. The discussion in the ten books of the *Republic* covers a wide range of topics including: morality, social structure, education, the nature of reality and politics. Nevertheless, the main theme of the work is an enquiry into justice in the state and the soul. In the work, Socrates and the respondents adopt three main methods of enquiry: elenchus, display oration and dialectic.

On a first reading of the *Republic*, the interventions from the respondents, together with Socrates' reaction to these interventions, appear to be a convenient device used by Plato to add a dramatic aspect to the lengthy dialogue in order to draw the reader's attention to the philosophical theories being advanced.

This study aims to demonstrate that a closer study of the *Republic* suggests that, in addition to this, the dramatic and literary elements in this work emphasise the inconclusive nature of the dialogue. They also raise a question as to whether Plato intended the reader to be fully convinced of the controversial theories put forward in the *Republic*, some of which are challenged by the respondents.

This study considers the role of the respondents in the *Republic*, together with the role of Socrates. Particular attention is paid to the theme of uncertainty and

problematizing, which runs through the dialogue in the different methods of enquiry adopted by Socrates and the respondents. It seeks to establish that in the *Republic*, Plato appears to be problematizing his own idea.

An example of this approach is an enquiry into the role of Thrasymachus in the *Republic*. From a philosophical perspective, in Book I, Thrasymachus puts forward a series of important arguments that favour injustice. Through the elenchus exchange with Socrates, the arguments advanced by Thrasymachus are argued by Socrates to be contradictory. Although he is present for the remainder of the discussion and makes a few minor remarks in the *Republic*, Thrasymachus plays no further role in the philosophical enquiry.

However, from a philosophical, dramatic and literary perspective, Thrasymachus' presence is felt throughout the *Republic*. After the elenchus exchange between Socrates and Thrasymachus in Book I, Thrasymachus speaks up on one occasion and Socrates and the respondents make a number of references to him during the course of the dialectic enquiry.

In addition to the direct references to Thrasymachus in the dialectic enquiry in the *Republic*, there would appear to be a number of indirect references to him. These are designed to make the reader wary of Thrasymachus' character and the arguments that he gives in Book I in support of the tyrant and of tyranny.

These references to Thrasymachus remind the reader of the strength of the arguments given by him in Book I. They also suggest to the reader that the arguments advanced by Thrasymachus in Book I are not fully defeated by Socrates and the respondents in the dialectic enquiry in the *Republic*. The philosophical and dramatic role of Thrasymachus in the *Republic* is considered in detail in this study.

Another example of a philosophical, dramatic and literary enquiry into the *Republic* is the role of Glaucon and Adeimantus in this dialogue. From a philosophical perspective, their input at the beginning of Book II is important and it sets the basis for the discussion in the remainder of the work. Their contribution to the enquiry in the remaining Books of the *Republic* seems, at first sight, to be of less significance

philosophically. However, from a philosophical, dramatic and literary perspective, the input from Glaucon and Adeimantus in Book II is not their only important contribution to the *Republic* overall. In the dialectic enquiry in the *Republic*, from Book II, 368a onwards, Glaucon and Adeimantus make a number of dramatic interruptions to the discussion and challenge the theories being advanced by Socrates. There are also examples where, in response to these interruptions, Socrates shows signs of hesitation and uncertainty with regard to the theories that he is outlining.

As in early Book II, these later examples of dramatic interruptions made by Glaucon and Adeimantus probe the theories being advanced by Socrates in the enquiry by forcing him to go into more detail about the controversial aspects of these theories. They also raise doubts about the feasibility of the theories that have been advanced by Socrates so far in the *Republic*.

The unexpected silence of Glaucon and Adeimantus at other points of the dialectic enquiry in the *Republic* adds to the reader's sense of uncertainty about the theories being advanced by Socrates in the dialogue. In a way, the reader feels the need to take over the role of the respondent at points in the dialogue and raise questions. As noted above in the typology of respondents, this is also a feature of the later dialogues where the respondent plays a less dramatic role with reduced input. The role of Glaucon and Adeimantus in the *Republic* is a major area of enquiry in this study.

Provisional conclusion of this study

The above examples of the input from Thrasymachus, Glaucon and Adeimantus, together with Socrates' reaction to these, alert the reader to some important connections between the philosophical and dramatic aspects of the *Republic*. These connections would not become evident from a study of the work from a purely philosophical or literary perspective. They help the reader to gain a broader understanding of the work as a whole and what message or messages Plato may have been trying to convey. They also lead to a less clear-cut interpretation of the dialogue.

Synopsis of chapters

Chapter 1

Cephalus, Polemarchus and Thrasymachus: Injustice and the elenchus method tested

In chapter 1 of this study, consideration is given to the input from Cephalus and Polemarchus in *Republic* Book I. It then investigates a number of highly dramatic interruptions and responses made by Thrasymachus in Book I. These are introduced as the enquiry into justice has just begun and after Cephalus and Polemarchus have outlined their views concerning justice. The level of rudeness and lack of co-operation displayed by Thrasymachus in these interruptions is much greater than that found in the remaining books of the *Republic*. Consideration is given to the significance of the interruptions and responses made by Thrasymachus and what may have prompted him to interrupt at this stage in the dialogue. In *Republic* Book I Socrates adopts the elenchus method of enquiry.

This chapter draws attention to the inconclusive nature of the end of Book I. It suggests that Plato may not have expected the reader to be satisfied with the outcome of the enquiry so far. The discussions in Book I have not provided an answer to the original question: what is justice? This becomes apparent in the closing words of Socrates in Book I. He admits at the end of the discussion with Thrasymachus that he has still not reached an understanding of the nature of justice. 'For so long as I don't know what justice is I'm hardly likely to find out whether it is an excellence or not, or whether it makes a man happy or unhappy' (*Republic*, 354b, Book I). He notes that in the discussion he got carried away enquiring into the particular examples concerning justice put forward by the respondents rather than focusing on the core question: what is justice (354b)?

So, although Socrates appears to have defeated the respondents Cephalus, Polemarchus and Thrasymachus, doubt is placed on the usefulness of the elenchus method in providing an answer to the question of what comprises justice. Also, the ongoing presence of Thrasymachus in the remaining Books of the *Republic* suggests that the arguments advanced by him in favour of injustice have not been fully defeated by Socrates in Book I.

Chapter 2

Glaucou and Adeimantus: The display oration method and a challenge to Socrates

Chapter 2 focuses on *Republic* Book II, part I, (357a-367e) where there are a number of highly dramatic interruptions, followed by speeches, from Glaucon and Adeimantus.³² These come at a time when the enquiry into justice in Book I has ended inconclusively and Socrates has expressed disappointment at the outcome of the enquiry so far. This is a feature of the aporetic dialogue. However, the *Republic* differs from the aporetic dialogue in that the enquiry continues, despite the inconclusive end to Book I. In their speeches in Book II, Glaucon and Adeimantus display a high level of understanding of the issues relating to justice and injustice that were raised by Thrasymachus in Book I. This chapter considers the significance of the input from Glaucon and Adeimantus in Book II, part 1, and what may have prompted them to interrupt at this stage of the dialogue. It also considers in detail the arguments advanced by Glaucon and Adeimantus, the response made by Socrates to these arguments, and the role that he plays in this part of the *Republic*. In *Republic* Book II, part 1, Glaucon and Adeimantus adopt the display oration method of enquiry.

Unusually, in *Republic* Book II, part 1, Glaucon and Adeimantus take the lead in the enquiry, rather than Socrates. The illustrations which they provide of the fate of the just and unjust individuals are powerful and they appear to be representative of the view of Plato's contemporary society. Unlike the interruptions from Thrasymachus in Book I, the challenge from Glaucon and Adeimantus in early Book II gives Socrates the opportunity to advance the theory of justice which is outlined in Book IV and expanded upon in the remaining Books of the dialogue. Socrates' reaction to the speeches from Glaucon and Adeimantus is significant. He does not demonstrate any anger at this point, despite the strong challenge put to him and the enormous task set by Glaucon and Adeimantus to demonstrate that justice is good for its own sake as well as its consequences.

³² It is important to note that the current division of the *Republic* into ten Books is likely to have been made after Plato's time. The divisions of the *Republic* that I refer to in this study, that is Books and parts of Books, have been chosen to reflect changes in the aspects of the subjects being considered by Socrates and the respondents and the methods of enquiry adopted by them.

This leads to a more fruitful enquiry in the remaining Books of the *Republic*, where Glaucon and Adeimantus act as respondents with Socrates leading the enquiry. However, it is notable that in his defence of justice Socrates includes stories, images and myth which go beyond the philosophical theories advanced, in order to demonstrate that justice is good for its own sake as well as for its consequences.

Chapter 3

The dialectic method of enquiry: Socrates' response to Glaucon and Adeimantus

In *Republic* Book II, part 2, from 368a onwards the reader and audience are introduced to a new method of enquiry: the dialectic method. This method is introduced by Socrates and it is the method that he adopts in the remaining Books of the *Republic*, with the exception of The Myth of Er in Book X. The change of approach has been prompted by the dramatic end to *Republic* Book II, part 1, 367d-e, where Adeimantus challenges Socrates to put forward his own theory of justice. Chapter 3 of this study considers Socrates' initial response to Glaucon and Adeimantus in Book II, 368a to 376c, and their reaction to his response. It gives detailed consideration to *Republic* Book IV, 427d-445e, where through the dialectic method of enquiry, Socrates and the respondents give an account of the just state and just soul.

The role of Socrates and the respondents changes considerably from Book II, part 2, 368a onwards. The introduction of the dialectic method of enquiry enables Socrates and the respondents to advance positive theories concerning justice in the state and the soul. Nevertheless, Plato seems to be sending mixed messages to the reader and audience. Despite the new found confidence displayed by Socrates in Book II, part 2 and Book IV of the *Republic*, there are examples of hesitation displayed by him which may place doubt on whether the reader is expected to be fully convinced of the theories being advanced.

In the parts of the *Republic* considered in chapter 3, Plato, through the character of Socrates, displays hesitancy, uncertainty and a lack of resolve on a number of occasions: from being reluctant to commence the enquiry due to his lack of ability, to introducing a very basic community and then putting forward an expanded one. Then,

when considering justice in the state and individual he starts with the 'big picture' first. Also, he is reluctant to discuss the issue of women and the family. Significantly, in Books VIII and IX of the *Republic*, Socrates and the respondents consider imperfect states and souls and they reach the conclusion that should the ideal state, as advanced in Book IV, ever become a reality, it would eventually deteriorate into a tyranny. Notably, this was what Socrates, Glaucon and Adeimantus considered to be the worst form of state but the one that Thrasymachus promoted in Book I. They also conclude that the ideal state would not become a reality in this world.

The reluctance displayed by Socrates leaves the reader confused as to why Glaucon and Adeimantus are portrayed in Book IV as being in agreement with Socrates rather than raising doubts about the theories being advanced by him. However, this situation changes in Books V and VI of the *Republic* where Glaucon and Adeimantus make a number of dramatic entries into the discussion, which influence the course of the enquiry in the remaining Books of the dialogue.

Chapter 4

Adeimantus: Women and the family

There are a number of dramatic interruptions and responses made by the respondents at intervals in the *Republic* Book II, 368a onwards. These often result in a change over of respondent. Some rudeness is displayed by the respondents on these occasions. These usually occur at a time when Socrates is putting forward a controversial theory, or has just done so. Chapter 4 focuses on the interruption from Adeimantus at the beginning of Book V, (449b-450a), which has been prompted by Polemarchus. Consideration is given to this interruption from Adeimantus and on the response to this from Socrates. In this chapter, consideration is also given to the controversial theories concerning women and the family as outlined by Socrates in Book V, the method of enquiry adopted by Socrates and the input from the respondents after the initial interruption at the beginning of Book V.

The interruption from Adeimantus at the beginning of Book V is significant and it changes the direction of the enquiry in that it forces Socrates to consider the issue of women and the family in the ideal state, which he was ostensibly trying to avoid. The interruption occurs at a time when the philosophical enquiry has just been completed

into justice in the city and with respect to the individual. This has resulted in a controversial theory of justice being outlined by Socrates and the respondents and he is about to embark on injustice.

In this example, philosophical elements of the dialogue interact with the dramatic elements. For example, the increased dramatic tension at the beginning of Book V coincides with an increase in the intensity and unorthodoxy of the philosophical enquiry and the theories that are resulting from the enquiry. The proposals that Socrates advanced prior to this interruption concerning the just state and just individual did not provide sufficient detail concerning the practical arrangements for implementing the ideal state. The enquiry into women and the family in Book V, forces Socrates and the respondents to think through the implications of the theories that they have advanced in the dialectic enquiry, which started at 368a, Book II, part 2. Indeed, Book V and the later Books of the *Republic* are concerned with the implications of the ideal state and soul.

Chapter 5

Adeimantus: The role of the philosopher in society

Chapter 5 focuses on Book VI and early book VII of the *Republic* where Socrates and the respondents consider the role of the philosopher in society. There are several highly dramatic interruptions and illustrations in this part of the *Republic* including the interruption from Adeimantus at 487b-d where he accuses the majority of contemporary philosophers of being useless members of society. This chapter considers this interruption from Adeimantus together with Socrates' initial response to the interruption. It also looks at the defence of the philosopher as outlined by Socrates. Consideration is given to the significance of the simile of the sun, the image of the line and the allegory of the cave (502c-521b), which provide the reader and audience with a graphic illustration of the level of knowledge, which the guardians would seek to possess as opposed to the auxiliaries and workers in the ideal state.

The interruption from Adeimantus at 487b, together with Glaucon's reaction to 'wave three' at 473e-474a where Socrates asserts that philosophers should be put in charge of the state, has a strong impact on the enquiry. It requires Socrates to provide further justification for the thesis that philosophers should be put in charge in

the ideal state. The three waves in Book V give the impression of Socrates and the respondents swimming together to survive each wave. Indeed, this appears to be a metaphor for the dialectic method of enquiry in the *Republic*. It would seem that each time Socrates and the respondents advance positive theories in the enquiry, they are put in a situation where it becomes necessary for them to give further consideration to these theories. This is usually prompted by an interruption from Glaucon or Adeimantus.

In the illustrations of the Sun, Line and Cave, Socrates shows signs of hesitation and uncertainty. This is because, understandably, he is only able to provide simile, image and allegory rather than a description of the Form of the Good itself. As a result of this, the core metaphysics of the *Republic* is based on simile, image and allegory rather than fact. Socrates and the respondents do not have the knowledge that the philosophers in the ideal state would possess. The message emerging here seems to point to our limited ability to gain knowledge of the Form of the Good and the other Forms.

At the end of the section of the *Republic* discussed in this chapter, the reader is left in doubt as to whether they are supposed to be convinced of the theories being outlined by Socrates and the respondents. Nevertheless, Plato has given an impressive defence of the philosopher and philosophy.

Note on this study

Although the individual chapters of this study focus on specific areas of the *Republic*, in each chapter consideration is also given to some wider issues relating to the *Republic* as a whole. The main primary source for this enquiry is Plato's *Republic*. However, reference is also made to a number of other early and middle dialogues of Plato in the course of this study. In order to gain as broad an appreciation as possible of the *Republic* in translation, I have studied a number of translations of this dialogue.³³

³³ These translations include Lee (2003), Reeve (2004), and Waterfield (1998), with reference being made in my enquiry to the Lee translation. Reference has also been made to Emlyn-Jones (2007) translation of *Republic* Books I-2, 368c4, and Halliwell (1998) translation of *Republic* Book V.

Chapter 1

Cephalus, Polemarchus and Thrasymachus: Injustice and the elenchus method tested

Introduction

There are a number of highly dramatic interruptions and responses made by Thrasymachus in the *Republic* Book I. These come as the enquiry into justice has just begun and after Socrates has carried out an enquiry with Cephalus and Polemarchus concerning the nature of justice. The level of rudeness and lack of co-operation displayed by Thrasymachus in these interruptions is much greater than that found in the remaining books of the *Republic* or anywhere else in the works of Plato. Even in early Book II where Glaucon and Adeimantus advance a conventional theory of justice in a very assertive manner, they do not display any rudeness towards Socrates.¹

This chapter considers the input from the three respondents in Book I and in particular Thrasymachus. It also investigates what prompted Thrasymachus to interrupt at this stage in the dialogue. It draws attention to the inconclusive nature of the end of Book I and highlights the importance of Book I within the *Republic* as a whole. It also brings into prominence the significance of the role of Thrasymachus in the *Republic* overall. In Book I, Socrates adopts the elenchus method of enquiry.

(Section 1)

The dramatic entry of Thrasymachus into the enquiry and what has prompted this development

- The dramatic entry of Thrasymachus into the enquiry

Thrasymachus, the main respondent in *Republic* Book I, is introduced at 336b. He makes a very striking entry into the proceedings. Socrates observes that Thrasymachus had tried to interrupt while he had been in discussion with Polemarchus concerning the nature of justice. According to Socrates, Thrasymachus 'sprang on us

¹ Although at 362e, Book II, part 1, Adeimantus gets close to being rude to Socrates when he says 'That's nonsense. But listen to what I have to say.'

like a wild beast, as if he wanted to tear us in pieces. Polemarchus and I were panic-stricken, as Thrasymachus burst out' and started mocking the elenchus method of enquiry, which Socrates was using. Thrasymachus claims that it is easier to ask questions than to answer them and he urges Socrates to give an answer himself about what justice is (336b-d). Importantly, in complaining about the shortcomings of the elenchus method used by Socrates, by asserting that it is easier to ask questions than to put forward theories of your own, Thrasymachus is challenging Socrates to examine his own assumptions concerning the subject they are investigating.² Although the character Socrates does not provide an answer of his own in Book I, he proceeds to give a very long and impressive answer from Book II, 368a onwards - effectively the rest of the *Republic*.

The introduction of the character Thrasymachus gives the impression of an impatient respondent who is sceptical about the methods of enquiry adopted by Socrates and the other respondents. The image of the beast is significant in this passage. It suggests that there is a moral link between man and the beast with the unjust man having the potential to act like a beast.³ This is an image which is important later in the *Republic* when Socrates describes the appetitive element within the soul as the beast or the many-headed creature which needs to be controlled by the element of reason within the soul (588c-d, Book IX). Why were Socrates and Polemarchus depicted as being stricken by panic when Thrasymachus burst into the discussion? Was it because of the forceful nature of his interruption or was there some other explanation? It can be appreciated that in this passage Socrates, the narrator, is talking somewhat tongue-in-cheek, winking at the reader.⁴ Nevertheless, in his depiction of Thrasymachus' entry into the enquiry, Plato appears to be sending a strong message to the reader concerning the importance of the character Thrasymachus in the dialogue overall.

It becomes apparent later in the *Republic* that Socrates' negative portrayal of Thrasymachus in Book I corresponds with his disapproval of the theory of justice advanced by Thrasymachus. Some have argued that the description of

² Blondell 2002, p. 186.

³ Rutherford 1995, p. 217.

⁴ It is worth observing that in his privileged position as narrator Socrates can turn the reader against Thrasymachus before he has opened his mouth.

Thrasymachus as he enters into the discussion demonstrates that Plato dislikes him.⁵ I would argue that although we cannot claim to know what Plato liked or disliked, another possibility is that it is the theory of justice that Thrasymachus states in Book I that Plato disliked rather than the character Thrasymachus. Also, it is more likely to be Socrates' method of enquiry that Thrasymachus disliked rather than Socrates himself. Perhaps the immediate reaction of Socrates and Polemarchus to the interruption by Thrasymachus was a warning signal by Plato to the reader that the enquiry into justice would be difficult and that Socrates and the respondents would need to be on their guard against opponents such as Thrasymachus along the way.⁶

This leads the reader to question what it was that caused the character Thrasymachus to become so upset about in the earlier discussions between Socrates and Cephalus and Socrates and Polemarchus. In his initial outburst, Thrasymachus expresses concern about the method of enquiry adopted by Socrates in his discussions with Cephalus and Polemarchus and the outcome of the enquiry in *Republic* Book I so far. Socrates claims to lack the ability to provide a view of his own concerning justice. In response to this, Thrasymachus laughs and asserts sarcastically 'There you go with your old affectation, Socrates. I knew it, and I told the others that you would never let yourself be questioned, but go on shamming ignorance and do anything rather than give a straight answer' (337a). Thrasymachus' entry into the discussion brings a change of atmosphere to the proceedings from friendly to challenging. It also introduces a challenge to the elenchus method of enquiry adopted by Socrates. Thrasymachus does not accept Socrates' apparent ignorance (336c).

Before considering the exchange between Socrates and Thrasymachus, this enquiry considers the discussion with Socrates and Cephalus as well as the discussion between Socrates and Polemarchus, in order to establish what it was about these interchanges that prompted Thrasymachus to become so agitated and to join in the enquiry. In his discussions with the respondents in *Republic* Book I, Socrates adopts the elenchus or Socratic method of enquiry, which has been defined as 'eliciting from his victims answers to his questions, and then demolishing them by showing them to be inconsistent with other opinions which the victims are not willing to give up. Often

⁵ Beversluis 2000, p. 222.

⁶ It is important to bear in mind that all the characters who feature in the *Republic* and the other dialogues of Plato are literary creations of Plato who uses them for his own purposes. However, a number of his characters are named after real individuals and Plato includes some features of these historical characters in his works, sometimes ironically, for example, Polemarchus and Cephalus.

these are generally accepted views.⁷ An example of this can be found in the *Gorgias* in the exchange between Socrates and Gorgias. Socrates points out a flaw in Gorgias' argument. Gorgias has claimed that a rhetorician might use his skill for immoral use but also that a rhetorician cannot do wrong (*Gorgias*, 460a-461b). The flaw that Socrates is pointing to here is that Gorgias' argument is inconsistent and in need of revision. According to Gorgias, the rhetorician both could and could not make a wrong use of his oratory skills and this is an inconsistent argument.

The elenchus method of enquiry has been described as follows:

1. 'The interlocutor asserts a thesis, p, which Socrates considers false and targets for refutation.
2. Socrates secures agreement to further premises, say q, and r (each of which may stand for a number of associated propositions). The agreement is ad hoc: Socrates argues from q, r, not to them.
3. Socrates then argues, and the interlocutor agrees, that q and r entail not-p.
4. Socrates then claims that he has shown that not-p is true and that p is false.⁸

In what follows, consideration is given to the elenchus exchanges in *Republic* Book I.

- The exchange between Socrates and Cephalus

The first significant conversation in the *Republic* Book I is between Socrates and Cephalus. This begins at 328c where Cephalus welcomes Socrates and he notes that it has been a long time since they have seen Socrates in Piraeus and he urges him to visit more often. Their conversation develops into a basic type of elenchus exchange at *Republic*, 331c, where Socrates provides the following definition which is intended to summarise Cephalus' view concerning justice: 'that doing right, consists simply and solely in truthfulness and returning anything we have borrowed.' Socrates

⁷ This definition is provided by Hare (1996, pp. 41-42).

⁸ This description is provided by Vlastos (1995, p. 11). Vlastos alerts the reader to the point that although the elenchus defeats inconsistency, it does not guarantee the truth/falsehood of premisses.

observes, however, that it would not be appropriate to return a weapon that you had borrowed from a friend if the friend had since gone mad.⁹ Socrates concludes therefore that justice does not consist simply in being truthful and returning what you have borrowed (331d). At this point in the dialogue, Polemarchus interrupts and asserts that Cephalus' definition of justice is correct at any rate if we are to believe what the poet Simonides has said (331d). Cephalus then hands over the discussion to Polemarchus and he leaves the gathering to attend to his sacrifice.

The elenchus exchange between Socrates and Cephalus appears to follow Vlastos' standard format as outlined above. But, the exchange is too short to have an impact on the respondent or to provide the audience and reader with an answer to the question under discussion: what is justice?

It is interesting that the discussion with Cephalus ends so quickly at 331d and that Socrates moves on swiftly to discuss the matter further with Polemarchus. Surprisingly, Socrates does not try to persuade Cephalus to continue with the enquiry or to return after his sacrificial duties are complete. None of the audience ask for him to stay either. The reader is left with the impression that there would be little point in Socrates continuing the enquiry with Cephalus as his vision of justice is too broad to enable them to make any significant progress in their enquiry.¹⁰ It also suggests to the reader that Plato is not satisfied with the view of justice outlined by Cephalus, which associates justice simply with a person's character (*tropos*) (329d-330a), and that he is seeking a narrower and more focussed theory of justice to emerge from the dialogue in the *Republic*. In Book I, Cephalus refers to two character types, good and bad. However, in Book IV, Socrates introduces the more complex theory of the tripartite soul which comprises reason, spirit and appetite. He also introduces the theory of the tripartite state which comprises guardians, auxiliaries and workers.

Some commentators have asserted that when Cephalus leaves the conversation to attend to his sacrifice, he is content to accept his traditional values rather than engage in

⁹ Gifford (2001, p. 75) includes an interesting discussion on the irony associated with the fact that selling weapons to a madman is closely linked to the arms business in which Cephalus was engaged. The irony goes further: Cephalus' contented life can be contrasted with the fate of his son Polemarchus under the thirty tyrants. Nails (2002, p. 251) gives a useful account of Polemarchus' death at the hands of the thirty tyrants.

¹⁰ As noted in the typology of key respondents in the introductory chapter of this study, Cephalus fits into the category of 'warm-up' respondents, along with Lysimachus in the *Laches*.

elenctic scrutiny of these values.¹¹ I would suggest that in this passage Plato may be alerting the reader to the danger of simply sticking to traditional values rather than examining one's beliefs in order to establish whether the life you are leading is just. Others have suggested helpfully that the dramatic presentation of Cephalus is designed to demonstrate Cephalus' lack of reflection in comparison with Socrates who has practised philosophy all his life.¹² Significantly, Cephalus' interest in the conversation with Socrates did not last long. This is despite his new interest in discussion, which he claims to have acquired at the beginning of the conversation with Socrates (328d).¹³ Cephalus can be contrasted here with the guardians in the ideal state who spend years training in philosophy.

Cephalus is the only member of the party to leave, and his departure means that he will not be given the opportunity to learn more about justice on this occasion.¹⁴ This seems unfortunate given the warm welcome that he had extended to Socrates, and also the hospitality that Socrates had received from Polemarchus, Cephalus' son. But, it also suggests that Cephalus is simply too set in his ways to develop his view concerning justice. Cephalus does not seem to appreciate the significance of the outcome of his short elenchus style exchange with Socrates, that is, the view concerning justice attributed to Cephalus has been found to be contradictory. Until he appreciates this fact, he will be unable to move his understanding concerning justice forward. Importantly, Cephalus is not missed when he leaves the discussion.

The reader is left with the impression that Cephalus would have been confused by the enquiry that followed. This suggests that it would take too long to educate Cephalus about the error of his beliefs and there was not sufficient time in the discussion in the *Republic* to make any progress in this direction.¹⁵ Nevertheless, just

¹¹ Blondell 2002, p. 170.

¹² Gifford 2001, p. 63.

¹³ Gifford 2001, p. 73.

¹⁴ The departure of Cephalus from the discussion in *Republic* Book I appears to prefigure the enquiry into the ideal state and soul in Book IV. Notably, in the ideal state it would not be necessary for everyone to have knowledge of justice. Only the guardians or rulers would be given the opportunity to gain knowledge of justice through their study of the Forms. The other two classes, the workers and auxiliaries, would only have a limited understanding of such matters.

¹⁵ Reeve (2006, p. 9) puts forward a defence of Cephalus and he suggests an alternative reason for Cephalus' departure from the enquiry. Reeve asserts that 'Cephalus shows that the elenchus is not necessary to produce a moral character like Socrates', and is of no use to someone like himself who already has such a character.' Emlyn-Jones (2007, pp. 14-15) alerts the reader to some of the strengths of Cephalus' position. He notes the importance that Cephalus places on *tropos* or disposition and that this is a theme which Socrates develops further after Book I of the *Republic*.

as Cephalus appears to have placed too great a reliance on the goodness or badness of a person's character in his overall understanding of justice, Socrates' lack of success in gaining knowledge through the elenchus method suggests that he may be placing too much reliance on this method of enquiry.

It is interesting to consider what level of reliance Cephalus places on money.¹⁶ Apart from the material comforts that it provides, Cephalus values money as a means of paying off debts in this life and making sacrifices to the gods in order to secure a safe passage into the next life. In his conversation with Socrates, Cephalus comments on the value of wealth to the individual. He asserts 'For wealth contributes very greatly to one's ability to avoid both unintentional cheating or lying and the fear that one has left some sacrifice to God unmade or some debt to man unpaid before one dies' (331b). In his account of the just state and the just soul in *Republic* Book IV Socrates advances a theory of justice that does not place reliance on money. The guardians, who are led by reason, will be responsible for ruling the state and they will have no personal property or wealth. The workers, who are led by appetite, will be the only members of society to own property and to accumulate personal wealth. However, the workers will have no say in the running of the state and they will only have a limited understanding of justice, unlike the guardians who will be given the opportunity to gain knowledge of the Forms.

It has been argued by some that, due to his reliance on money for virtue, Cephalus' character represents the oligarchic character which is discussed by Socrates in *Republic* Book VIII, 553a-555b in relation to the deterioration of the just state and individual.¹⁷ Socrates describes the oligarchic character as one who gives 'overriding importance' to money (554a). In my view, Cephalus' character more closely represents the workers in the ideal state.¹⁸ This is due to the fact that Cephalus does not appear to have any advanced views concerning justice. Also, like the workers in the ideal state, he has no involvement in the running of the state. This is because of his metic status in Athens.¹⁹ Although Cephalus places importance on money, he is described by Socrates as not being over-fond of money. In conversation with

¹⁶ Blondell (2002, p. 171) asserts that Cephalus places a high level of reliance on money for virtue.

¹⁷ This view is held by Blondell (2002, p. 172).

¹⁸ This view is also held by Aune (1997, p. 306).

¹⁹ Metics were foreigners who resided in Athens but did not have the rights and obligations of the citizens.

Socrates, Cephalus notes that he is aiming to leave to his sons a little more money than he inherited from his father (330b). This is in contrast with Cephalus' grandfather who multiplied his inheritance several times over (330b). Significantly, unlike the workers in the ideal state, Cephalus and his family did not have the benefit of the rule of the guardians and the protection of the auxiliaries. Plato's portrayal of Cephalus brings to light the vulnerability of the individual and family in an unjust state. This is reflected historically in the fate of Cephalus' family after his death, when they were attacked by the thirty tyrants.

Beverluis has defended Cephalus' character and philosophical understanding against criticisms such as those outlined above. He argues that Cephalus associates happiness with 'contentment and tranquility of mind.' According to Beverluis, this is a psychological and contingent connection unlike the logical connection that Socrates is seeking to establish where it would follow, for example, that justice would lead to happiness in the individual.²⁰ Beverluis builds up a picture of Cephalus' character which suggests that Plato is portraying him as having a virtuous disposition.²¹ In my view, in his depiction of the character Cephalus, Plato is pointing to a flaw in his character. This is Cephalus' lack of reflection concerning justice which has resulted in his limited understanding of what would comprise a just life for all.

Importantly, if Plato was as satisfied as Beverluis suggests with the character of Cephalus and his philosophical understanding, why was it necessary for him to write another nine books of the *Republic* in order to establish what would comprise a just life and soul? As observed in the introductory chapter of this study, it is a weakness of Beverluis that in focusing his attention on what the character Socrates is up to he fails to consider what Plato may have been trying to achieve in his depiction of Socrates and the respondents in the *Republic* and the other dialogues. I would agree with Beverluis, that it is Socrates and not Cephalus that puts forward the definition: that doing right or justice consists in being honest and returning any goods that you have borrowed (331c).²² However, I would argue that Socrates' interpretation of the position advanced by Cephalus seems consistent given Plato's overall depiction of Socrates in Book I and his later development of ideas.

²⁰ Beverluis 2000, p. 191.

²¹ Beverluis 2000, pp. 192-196.

²² Beverluis 2000, p. 198.

In this exchange, the drama and philosophy have been carefully arranged to complement each other and bring out the weaknesses in the character of Cephalus and the philosophical views that he holds. It also highlights weaknesses in the elenchus method of enquiry which failed to provide an answer to the question under discussion and did not hold Cephalus' attention for long enough as he left the discussion when it had only just started. These interconnections help the reader to appreciate the relevance of the character Cephalus and the philosophical views which he holds to the *Republic* as a whole and how this fits in with Plato's overall aims in the dialogue. They also help to prepare the reader for the theory of justice outlined by Socrates from Book II, 368a onwards, which divides the ideal state into three distinct character types, which are dominated by reason, spirit or appetite, with three distinct roles to play within the state.

- The elenchus between Socrates and Polemarchus

Polemarchus enters the discussion at 331d-e where he defends the view of justice attributed to his father.²³ Polemarchus rewords the definition slightly as follows: 'That it is right to give every man his due' (331e). We are told that the definition of justice outlined by Polemarchus had been inspired by the poet Simonides. In response to this assertion by Polemarchus, Socrates considers what the poet meant by these words. Socrates proceeds to examine the definition of justice given by Polemarchus using the elenchus method of enquiry. He notes that this would not include returning a weapon to a friend, if the friend that you had lent it to had since gone mad and Polemarchus agrees with this observation (332a). Socrates notes that 'Simonides must mean something different from this when he says that it is right to give every man his due' (332a). Unlike Cephalus, Polemarchus continues the enquiry with Socrates at this point rather than giving up at the first hurdle.²⁴

Socrates asks Polemarchus whether we should give our enemies what is due to them. In response to this, Polemarchus asserts that we should and that this would be

²³ As observed in the typology of key respondents in the introductory chapter of this study, Polemarchus belongs to the category of 'walkover' respondents.

²⁴ Another example of Polemarchus' assertive personality can be found at the beginning of Book I, 327c, where he urges Socrates not to return to Athens straight away. Also, at the beginning of Book V, 449b, Polemarchus urges Adeimantus to seek further clarification from Socrates concerning the arrangements for women and the family in the guardian and auxiliary classes in the ideal state.

to harm our enemies (332b). Socrates then brings in the notion of a skill, and he refers to medicine, cookery, navigation, music etc. and he considers what the purpose of such skills are. He argues that if we were to ask Simonides what the purpose of medical skill is, he would reply that 'it is the skill that supplies the body with remedies and with food and drink' (332c). Similarly, the purpose of cookery is to prepare well flavoured food. In the discussion that follows, Socrates demonstrates that the aim of the skilled person is to do his or her job well. The skilled person, for example the doctor, does not take advantage of his or her subjects but tries to cure them.

Socrates proceeds to consider what skill the just person would possess. In response to Socrates' questioning, Polemarchus asserts that the just person would have the skill to help one's friends and harm one's enemies (332d). Socrates then asks 'In what activity or occupation will he best be able to help his friends and harm his enemies' and they consider this question (332e). It is notable that Polemarchus does not question Socrates' assertion that justice is a skill, like the other skills referred to above. At this point in the discussion, Polemarchus could have questioned this as justice is not as easy to define as the other skills that Socrates has given, for example, shoemaking, cookery, farming etc. This could have been an opportunity for Polemarchus to take control of the conversation. Socrates proceeds to argue that justice is human excellence and Polemarchus agrees with this assertion. Socrates then goes on to argue that men when harmed become more unjust and just men would never use their justice to make others more unjust (335c-d). He concludes therefore that 'it is not the function of the good man to do harm but of his opposite' and Polemarchus agrees with him (335d).

Through the discussion which follows, it transpires that the definition of justice provided by Polemarchus does not stand up to Socrates' scrutiny. Polemarchus had maintained that justice is giving every man his due. He had then claimed that it is right to harm one's enemies. However, in the ongoing discussion with Socrates, it appears that the just person would never harm anyone whether friend or enemy and Polemarchus agrees with this observation. Socrates concludes therefore that they must have interpreted the poet Simonides incorrectly (335e).

The elenchus exchange between Socrates and Polemarchus ends inconclusively but amicably. At the close of the discussion with Polemarchus, Socrates admits that they

have not yet found what justice is and he asks if any other member of the audience would like to give a suggestion (336a). At the end of this exchange the reader is left somewhat perplexed and this may explain why Thrasymachus is so irritated at this stage in the dialogue. Polemarchus seems to have given in very easily to the points put forward by Socrates as the discussion progressed. Perhaps Polemarchus was not sufficiently interested in the enquiry to give an alternative theory of justice when his first one proved to lack foundation. Alternatively, he might not have appreciated fully the outcome of the discussion. Indeed, the manner in which Polemarchus is depicted in *Republic* Book I, suggests that he has never given much thought to the matter of justice.²⁵

Beverluis accuses Socrates of coercing Polemarchus into agreeing with the skill analogy as put forward by Socrates.²⁶ He also accuses Socrates of advancing inconsistent arguments, which Polemarchus fails to detect, in order to establish the skill analogy. In particular, Beverluis notes that according to Socrates, 'unlike the musician and the horseman, who cannot make people unmusical and unfit riders "by their arts", the surgeon can make people unhealthy by his art.'²⁷ It is worth pointing out that Socrates does not appear to suggest that a doctor should harm his patients. When Socrates and Polemarchus are considering how to interpret the definition attributed to Simonides that it is right to give every man his due, they just note that a doctor would have the ability to benefit his friends and harm his enemies in health (332d). Later, they agree that 'musicians will hardly use their skill to make their pupils unmusical, or riding masters to make their pupils bad horsemen' (335c).

In my view it is important to take the above assertions by Socrates in the context of the apparent outcome of the elenchus with Polemarchus that the just person would never harm anyone. Socrates' treatment of Polemarchus in this elenchus exchange appears to be consistent with his treatment of other respondents. The elenchus exchange seems to be designed to bring out weaknesses in Polemarchus' view concerning justice which feed into the remaining discussion in the *Republic*. It also alerts the reader to weaknesses in the views held by the character Socrates in Book I. As in the case of Cephalus above, if Plato was satisfied with the views put forward by Polemarchus, there would have been no need for him to consider the matter of

²⁵ Gifford 2001, pp. 86-87.

²⁶ Beverluis 2000, p. 207.

²⁷ Beverluis 2000, p. 218.

justice further in the *Republic*. The reader is left somewhat frustrated with the outcome of this exchange and this seems to be intentional on the part of Plato. Indeed, some commentators have suggested that the dramatic depiction of Thrasymachus' annoyance at this point in the dialogue alerts the reader to the fact that the elenchus has the potential to alienate the reader.²⁸

It is significant that Polemarchus chose to defend the notion of justice attributed to his father, rather than formulating a view of his own. Was this because he did not have any strong views of his own concerning justice? There appears to be an ironic connection between the life of the historical Polemarchus and the views concerning justice that he expresses in *Republic* Book I.²⁹ This makes the reader and audience in the background aware that in choosing to defend the notion of justice adhered to by his father, Polemarchus may be seen as defending the arms business transactions of his father. This was regardless of any moral implications associated with these business transactions. Socrates also seems to be implying an Athenian upper-class contempt for 'trade'.³⁰

In the exchange with Socrates, Polemarchus comes out looking like the ignorant participant, despite the fact that, unlike Socrates, he was willing to put forward a view that he believed in concerning justice, even though it was not a view which he had developed himself. This is a common feature of the elenchus method of enquiry as displayed in the earlier dialogues of Plato, for example, *Laches* and *Gorgias*, although unlike Polemarchus, the respondents in these dialogues are depicted as advancing views of their own. Importantly, Socrates' arguments have silenced Polemarchus, but they have not led the reader and background audience to any greater an understanding of what justice might consist of. This also happened in the exchange with Cephalus. This leads the reader to question why the character Socrates continues to adopt the elenchus method of enquiry, despite his lack of success in identifying the nature of justice.

²⁸ Blondell 2002, p. 180. It is notable that in the *Apology*, 23c, Socrates himself mentions the annoyance of interlocutors.

²⁹ Gifford (2001, pp. 88-89) alerts the reader to the ironic relationship between the life of the historical Polemarchus and the views concerning justice that he expresses in *Republic* Book I.

³⁰ Emlyn-Jones 2007, pp. 139-140.

(Section 2)

The elenchus exchange between Socrates and Thrasymachus

In *Republic* Book I, Socrates continues to employ the elenchus method in his discussion with Thrasymachus.³¹ It is interesting that despite the strong concern expressed by Thrasymachus regarding the elenchus method when he entered the discussion in *Republic* Book I, Socrates manages to entice Thrasymachus quickly into an elenchus exchange. Socrates does this by taking advantage of Thrasymachus' confidence in his opinions concerning justice. In the interchange with Socrates, Thrasymachus puts forward a number assertions concerning the nature of justice, which are clarified by Socrates. These include the following:

- 1) It is 'in the interest of the stronger party' (338c).
- 2) It is 'obedience to the ruling power' (339b).
- 3) It is for the good of someone else and not the individual (343c).

It is notable that the theories advanced by Thrasymachus all promote injustice rather than justice. His main argument is that it does not pay the individual to be just.

At *Republic*, 338c, Book I, Thrasymachus claims that justice 'is the interest of the stronger party.' Thrasymachus then clarifies this position by asserting that justice is 'obedience to the ruling power' (339b). In response to this, Socrates asks Thrasymachus a series of questions in order to establish whether these claims can be confirmed. He introduces the notion of a professional skill and argues that the interest of the professional is to do his job well. For example, the captain of a ship aims for a safe voyage and the doctor aims to cure his patients of their illnesses (341c-d). Socrates then asserts that 'all forms of skill rule and control their subject-matter' and he persuades Thrasymachus to agree with him, although very reluctantly (342c). Socrates includes ruling and justice among these skills. Once Thrasymachus has agreed with this, Socrates argues that the ruler, like all other professionals is ruled by his particular skill. In the case of the ruler, his skill is to look to the interest of his

³¹ As observed in the typology of key respondents in the introductory chapter of this study, Thrasymachus belongs to the category of clever hostile respondents, which also includes Callicles in the *Gorgias*.

subjects. Socrates concludes therefore that justice is not the interest of the stronger.

Importantly, the care that Socrates takes in considering this argument advanced by Thrasymachus, suggests that Plato took Thrasymachus' argument seriously as a theory of justice that would need to be given careful examination.³² This can be contrasted with the time Socrates spends in discussion with Cephalus and Polemarchus. The intensity of the exchange between Thrasymachus and Socrates also alerts the reader to the seriousness of the points being discussed.

Thrasymachus is caught out in the discussion with Socrates when he asserts that the ruler and other skilled professionals cannot make mistakes. He argues that 'to be really precise one must say that the ruler, in so far as he is a ruler, makes no mistake, and so infallibly enacts what is best for himself, which his subjects must perform. And so, as I said to begin with, "right" means the interest of the stronger party' (340e-341a). Here, Thrasymachus has accepted Socrates' notion of ruling as a professional skill which he could have rejected. Thrasymachus is attempting to demonstrate that the skilled ruler will rule for his own good. But, when Socrates later goes on to argue that the ruler rules for the good of his subjects and not himself, Thrasymachus cannot then reject the notion of ruling as a professional skill. In connection with this, although according to Socrates the rulers rule for the good of the state as a whole, this does not prove that justice is not biased in favour of the rulers.³³ However, Thrasymachus does not take up this point with Socrates and instead chooses to give another statement concerning justice.

It is surprising that Thrasymachus, like Polemarchus, did not question Socrates' use of the analogy of a professional skill. This could have enabled Thrasymachus to take back control of the discussion. Why is the character Thrasymachus portrayed falling into this trap? When he entered the discussion with Socrates, Thrasymachus gave the impression of being superior in intelligence to Cephalus and Polemarchus. But, like them, he quickly became a victim of Socrates' elenchus. Unlike Cephalus and Polemarchus, Thrasymachus became angry at his defeat and he took his anger out on

Socrates. Notably, in his eagerness to enter the discussion and put forward his view

³² This point is provided by Irwin (1995, p. 175).

³³ Irwin 1995, p. 177. Indeed, it is interesting that in the ideal state, as outlined by Socrates in *Republic* Book IV, the guardians are put in a privileged position within the state and given the opportunity to gain knowledge of the Forms. Nevertheless, as noted by Socrates at the beginning of Book IV, 421a-421c, the guardians are there to serve the state as a whole.

concerning Justice, the character Thrasymachus was not concentrating fully on the content of the discussion between Socrates and Polemarchus and he did not learn from that exchange. The ability to listen carefully will prove to be an important quality of the respondents who participate in the dialectic form of enquiry as illustrated in *Republic* Book II, 368a onwards. It is also necessary to have patience which Thrasymachus is shown to lack in Book I. These are qualities that the guardians in the ideal state will be required to demonstrate.

Despite apparently being defeated by Socrates in the enquiry so far, Thrasymachus is still convinced that he knows what justice is and he puts forward a further claim: justice is for the good of someone else and not the individual. He clarifies this position by asserting that 'Injustice or wrong is just the opposite of this, and rules those who are really simple and just, while they serve their ruler's interests because he is stronger than they, and as his subjects promote his happiness to the complete exclusion of their own' (343c-d). He argues that the just man always does worse than the unjust man in business, financial and other affairs, because of his honesty. Here Thrasymachus is portraying the unjust ruler as living a more prosperous and happier life than his subjects. He gives the example of the tyrant as the ultimate example of the unjust ruler. He argues that when the tyrant 'succeeds in robbing the whole body of citizens and reducing them to slavery', his subjects will think of him as happy and fortunate and themselves as unhappy and unfortunate (344b-c). The reference to the tyrant here is important in relation to the discussion of the tyrant in Books IX and X of the *Republic*, where Socrates argues that the tyrant is not as fortunate as Thrasymachus suggests. Unlike Cephalus and Polemarchus, Thrasymachus has not been silenced by his first round of elenchus with Socrates. This gives the reader and audience the impression that the Socratic method of enquiry is being put under strain by Thrasymachus' self-confidence and his lack of enthusiasm for any prolonged reflection on the theories concerning justice that he is advancing.

In response to this, Socrates asserts that Thrasymachus has not convinced him that 'injustice pays better than justice even if it has a clear field to do what it wants', as in the example of the tyrant (345a). Socrates then brings in the notion of a function and he claims that each art and profession has its own specific function which differs from the function of the other arts and professions (346a). Socrates claims that each professional skill brings its own particular benefit. He gives a number of examples

which include: the function of a doctor is to cure his patients and the function of a sea captain is to navigate safely in order to ensure a safe voyage (346a-c). Socrates gains Thrasymachus' agreement that each art and profession has its own particular benefit.

Socrates proceeds to assert that all arts and professions operate for the benefit of the subject rather than themselves. Having gained Thrasymachus' agreement on this, Socrates concludes that the ruler, like all other professionals, rules for the benefit of his subjects and not himself. He claims 'For in a city of good men there might well be as much competition to avoid power as there now is to get it, and it would be quite clear that the true ruler pursues his subjects' interest and not his own; consequently all wise men would prefer the benefit of this service at the hands of others rather than the labour of affording it to others themselves' (347d).

Now, Socrates is clearly looking towards a new theory of justice here, which he goes on to consider in detail in *Republic* Book IV. However, he does appear to be going beyond what Thrasymachus has agreed to at this stage of the enquiry.

Thrasymachus agreed that each art and profession has its own particular skill which it puts to use for the benefit of its subjects. Thrasymachus appears to have given in too easily to Socrates in agreeing that each profession operates to the advantage of the subject. Indeed, Thrasymachus could have argued that the difference between the just and unjust ruler is not simply a matter of professional expertise. Socrates' argument implies that if the ruler or other individual possesses a professional skill he or she will automatically use it to the advantage of his or her subjects. Thrasymachus could have argued that the unjust man is not trying to gain the expertise that the just man has and that the unjust person is led by other considerations than expertise, for example, he or she could have different priorities from the just man.³⁴ In the case of the tyrant, his priority would be to gain power rather than to be a good leader.

The elenchus exchange between Socrates and Thrasymachus continues from 351a to 352d, Book I, where Socrates claims that injustice is a source of disunity and therefore a source of weakness. This statement contradicts Thrasymachus, who has asserted that injustice is a source of strength. At *Republic*, 351c, Book I, Socrates

³⁴ This point is made by Annas (1981, pp. 51-52). See also, Emlyn-Jones (2007, p. 162) who observes that Thrasymachus and Socrates do not have any common ground at this point in the enquiry.

gives the example of a gang of thieves and he goes on to note that because unjust men will be competing against each other and everyone else, they will be incapable of any joint action, even for their common reward and that therefore injustice does not pay. Socrates concludes that 'Injustice, then, seems to have the following results, whether it occurs in a state or family or army or in anything else: it renders it incapable of any common action because of factions and quarrels and sets it at variance with itself and with its opponents and with whatever is just' (351e-352a). This is in stark contrast with the theory of justice as advanced by Socrates in *Republic* Book IV where the three elements of the city and the soul are required to play their particular role for the good of the city and soul overall. In defence of Thrasymachus here, he was not suggesting that the tyrant would seek to embark on any co-operative enterprises. The tyrant would use force to make people do what he or she wants.

In the final part of the exchange between Socrates and Thrasymachus in *Republic* Book I Socrates claims that, based on what they have already agreed, the just person is happier than the unjust person. This is the opposite of what Thrasymachus had originally suggested. Socrates introduces the notion of a function and he asserts that 'everything which has a function has its own particular excellence' (353b). He gives the examples of a horse, also eyes and ears. He notes that if these are deprived of their own particular excellence they are unable to perform well (353c-d). Socrates then proceeds to apply this argument to the mind and he notes that they had agreed earlier in the discussion (at 350c) that justice is the particular excellence of the mind (353e). It is worth remembering here that Socrates admitted at 350d that Thrasymachus did not give in easily to this point, so we can feel a sense of increased tension building up between Socrates and Thrasymachus.

Socrates concludes that 'the just mind and the just man will have a good life, and the unjust a bad life' (353e). This claim appears to go beyond what Socrates has sought to prove against Thrasymachus and in particular the argument concerning the function of the mind and virtue.³⁵

Although Thrasymachus does not take up this point with Socrates, it is notable that he distances himself from this conclusion. Thrasymachus responds by saying 'So it

³⁵ Irwin 1995, p. 179.

appears from your argument' (353e).³⁶ Thrasymachus is also outspoken at the end of their discussion saying to Socrates 'This is your holiday treat, so enjoy it' (354a). These comments from Thrasymachus, make the reader aware that Thrasymachus is not convinced by this final argument advanced by Socrates. The portrayal of Thrasymachus as sarcastic and outspoken gives the impression of a respondent who is not about to give up his original opinions concerning justice and injustice. It also suggests that Plato does not expect the reader to be fully convinced by the arguments advanced by Socrates in the elenchus exchange with Thrasymachus. The tone of Thrasymachus' last remark in *Republic* Book I alerts the reader to the fact that Thrasymachus has not been persuaded by Socrates' method of enquiry.³⁷

In the final part of their elenchus exchange, Thrasymachus appears to have just agreed with all the points put forward by Socrates as if he had lost interest in the discussion and in the method of enquiry being adopted by Socrates. This differs from the end of the exchanges with Cephalus and Polemarchus where Socrates was clearly in control of the proceedings and there was no tension between him and the respondent. Nevertheless, the elenchus exchanges between Socrates and Cephalus, Polemarchus and Thrasymachus have all ended inconclusively in *aporia*. This alerts the reader to Socrates' conspicuous lack of success in the elenchus exchanges in *Republic* Book I. The portrayal of Thrasymachus as distancing himself from the elenchus method suggests that Plato may have been preparing the reader for the introduction of a revised method of enquiry at this stage in the *Republic* which promotes a more co-operative approach between Socrates and the respondents.

In these examples, the elenchus method of questioning has enabled Socrates to argue that the statements made by Thrasymachus concerning justice appear to be incoherent. It is worth noting that this is only given the correctness of Socrates' arguments in his exchange with Thrasymachus, which are clearly weak. It leads to Thrasymachus displaying anger at his defeat and to Glaucon and Adeimantus displaying dissatisfaction with the outcome of the discussion. Thrasymachus is abusive to Socrates. Glaucon says to Socrates 'you seem to have fascinated Thrasymachus into a premature submission, like a snake charmer; but I am not satisfied yet about justice and injustice' (358b). So, although, in theory, Socrates has

³⁶ In this response to Socrates, Thrasymachus appears to be parodying Socrates who tends to say this to his respondents.

³⁷ Blondell 2002, p. 183.

defeated Thrasymachus through the elenchus method, the respondents are not satisfied with the outcome of the enquiry. Importantly, Socrates is not satisfied either with the inconclusive outcome of the enquiry. He admits at the end of *Republic* Book I that he has made no progress towards understanding the nature of justice (354b).

It would appear that one of the main stumbling blocks in the elenchus between Socrates and Thrasymachus is Thrasymachus' lack of faith in the elenchus method and his lack of co-operation in the enquiry. But, perhaps Thrasymachus is justified here. Socrates faced a similar situation with Polus and Calicles in the *Gorgias*, which also resulted in both of these respondents displaying anger at their defeat, and especially Calicles. In the case of Calicles, it is not resolved within the bounds of the dialogue. It becomes apparent at this stage of the enquiry, in *Republic* Book I, that if Socrates is going to have an impact on the respondents he will need to convince them rather than simply defeating them in the discussion. The reader can observe at the end of Book I that Thrasymachus is not really convinced of the arguments put forward by Socrates. We can also sympathise with the defiant position taken by Thrasymachus at the end of Book I, due to the weakness of the arguments advanced by Socrates in his exchange with Thrasymachus.

Significantly, in the exchange with Thrasymachus, Socrates asks Thrasymachus not to answer the questions contrary to his real opinion. In response to this, Thrasymachus says 'Yes, I will, to please you', 'since you won't let me speak freely' (350e). This comment from Thrasymachus leaves the reader in doubt as to whether Thrasymachus is giving his own view or not at this point in the discussion. The reader is surprised when Socrates replies to Thrasymachus 'Do as you suggest, and I will ask the questions' (350e). It is an important feature of the elenchus method of enquiry that the respondent says what he or she really believes.³⁸ This raises a question as to why Socrates insisted on continuing with the elenchus exchange with Thrasymachus, when Thrasymachus refused to be co-operative and felt that he was unable to speak freely. Beversluis claims that Thrasymachus is being insincere in places in the *Republic* Book I and he suggests that Socrates is aware of this fact.³⁹

³⁸ This point is noted by Brickhouse and Smith (1991, p. 158).

³⁹ Beversluis 2000, pp. 236-237, 239-240, 242-243.

In my view, Socrates does want Thrasymachus to answer his questions sincerely but he is unable to force him to do so. As Thrasymachus does not approve of the elenchus method of enquiry he does not appreciate the importance that Socrates places on sincerity in the elenchus. Nevertheless, Thrasymachus does appear to be sincere in the main arguments that he puts forward concerning justice. There is just some uncertainty concerning his sincerity at some points in the exchange in *Republic* Book I. But, without Thrasymachus' full co-operation, the elenchus exchange does not lead them any nearer to gaining knowledge concerning the nature of justice. At this point in the enquiry, Plato appears to be problematising 'sincerity' and 'co-operation'.

Beverluis goes beyond this, and accuses Socrates of being more concerned with winning arguments than finding out moral truths. He argues that in the elenchus with Thrasymachus, Socrates demonstrates a lack of care for the respondent's soul.⁴⁰

Admittedly, a number of the arguments advanced by Socrates against Thrasymachus do seem somewhat implausible, for example, that the shepherd operates in the interest of his flock and the ruler rules in the interest of his subjects. Also, the outcomes of each of the exchanges between Socrates and Thrasymachus do seem somewhat strained. This does not lead the reader to conclude that Socrates demonstrates a lack of care for the soul of the respondent. It brings to light a weakness in the elenchus method, in that it does not appear to be sufficient to deal with a respondent of the calibre of Thrasymachus. The fact that Socrates continued the discussion with Thrasymachus, despite his rudeness and lack of co-operation, suggests that Socrates did care for his soul. If Socrates was primarily concerned with winning arguments, he would have avoided taking on strong respondents such as Thrasymachus and continued his enquiry with weaker respondents such as Cephalus and Polemarchus.

Socrates does not convince Thrasymachus and this becomes a problem. This is because Socrates, as depicted in Book I of the *Republic*, does not have an alternative method of enquiry available to him. The reader can appreciate the level of frustration that Thrasymachus was experiencing during the course of the discussion when Socrates reports that 'Thrasymachus' agreement to all these points did not come as easily as I have described, but had to be dragged out from him with much difficulty, and with a great deal of sweat - for it was a hot day' (350c-d). This also alerts the reader to how difficult it is for the respondent to pass the Socratic elenctic test, that

⁴⁰ Beverluis 2000, p. 244.

is, to advance a definition that Socrates cannot find fault with.⁴¹ This would require the respondent to be aware of all the other propositions that are logically related to the proposition that he or she is putting forward. The subject matter that the dialogues focus on, for example, justice and virtue, make this even more difficult for the respondent to overcome as they may have deeply entrenched opinions concerning these matters that they would find difficult to revise.⁴² Indeed, the difficulty experienced by the respondent in attempting to pass the Socratic elenctic test and the aggravation that this caused for the respondent, may have influenced Plato's decision to revise the method of enquiry adopted by Socrates in the *Republic* Book II onwards.

In my view, in the elenchus exchange between Socrates and Thrasymachus in *Republic* Book I, Thrasymachus does not appear to have been fully defeated. This is because Thrasymachus justifiably demonstrates a lack of faith in the elenchus method and refuses to give up the views that he has put forward, despite being refuted by Socrates in the exchange. There are differing views on the outcome of the elenchus exchange between Socrates and Thrasymachus. Recent debates have focussed on the question as to whether Thrasymachus provides a coherent set of arguments in *Republic* Book I. Some commentators have sought to demonstrate that the various accounts of justice given by Thrasymachus are incoherent.⁴³ Others have defended Thrasymachus and asserted that his arguments in *Republic* Book I are coherent.⁴⁴

In addition to raising important questions concerning the strengths and weaknesses of the arguments given by the respondents and Socrates and the usefulness of the elenchus method of enquiry, Book I appears to have a wider remit within the *Republic* as a whole. A significant feature of the role of the respondents in Book I, and in particular Thrasymachus, is to draw to the attention of the reader the type of views held by members of the wider community concerning justice and the level of resistance they would display towards any attempt to question or change their views.

⁴¹ It is highly likely that any elenchus enquiry would end inconclusively in *aporia*. This alerts the reader to a negative aspect of this method of enquiry. The elenchus method does not enable Socrates or the respondent to advance a positive answer to the question under consideration.

⁴² Frede 1992, pp. 214-215.

⁴³ Everson (1998, pp. 99-131) puts forward the thesis that the arguments given by Thrasymachus in Book I are incoherent.

⁴⁴ Chappell (1993, pp. 10-17) and (2000, pp. 101-107) advances the thesis that Thrasymachus is being coherent in Book I.

This gives the reader an appreciation of the uphill battle that Plato would have to face in convincing the community that the theory of justice advanced in the *Republic*, 368a onwards, would work for the benefit of the community overall. It also gives the reader an appreciation of how out of line the views advanced by Socrates in the *Republic*, 368a onwards, may have been with the views held by the wider community concerning justice.⁴⁵ There are some other important connections between Book I and the rest of the *Republic* and these are considered in the next section of this chapter.

(Section 3)

Wider Issues relating to Book I and the *Republic* overall

- The ongoing presence of Thrasymachus in the *Republic*

After the elenchus exchange between Socrates and Thrasymachus in Book I, Thrasymachus remains mainly silent in the rest of the dialogue. Despite this, his presence is felt well beyond Book I of the *Republic*. He speaks up on one occasion and Socrates and the respondents make a number of references to him during the course of the dialectic enquiry. At 450a-b, Book V, Thrasymachus gives support to Adeimantus in his request to Socrates to provide further details concerning the arrangements for women and children in the ideal state. Thrasymachus says 'But what do you think we are here for, idle speculation or serious discussion?'⁴⁶ At 498c-d, Book VI, Socrates has been arguing that it would be possible for philosophers to be put in charge of the state. Adeimantus notes that Socrates would have trouble convincing his audience of this and in particular Thrasymachus.

At 545a-b, Book VIII, Socrates has just started the enquiry into imperfect states and souls and he observes that they will consider four types of societies and individuals that are worse than the ideal state and also consider which type of individual would be the happiest. This would enable them to establish whether 'to pursue injustice with Thrasymachus, or justice with the argument' that they are examining. The reader is surprised by this comment from Socrates as they had already agreed in Book IV to

⁴⁵Blondell (2002, pp. 36-37) provides a useful discussion on Plato's depiction of Socrates in his dialogues and the significance of the execution of the historical Socrates.

⁴⁶ Interestingly, 'idle speculation' is 'smelting ore' in Thrasymachus' expression. This is characteristically forceful and may recall 336e, Book I, where Socrates rates the search for justice above that for gold.

pursue justice with the establishment of the ideal state.

At 590d, Book IX, Socrates argues that in the ideal state the workers would benefit by being ruled by the guardians because of the wisdom that the guardians would possess. Socrates asserts that 'this control is not exercised, as Thrasymachus thought, to the detriment of the subject, but because it is better for every creature to be under the control of divine wisdom.' However, the reader can observe that in both the ideal state and the state advanced by Thrasymachus, it is necessary for the workers who make up the majority of the population, to be controlled by the minority. These references to Thrasymachus remind the reader of the strength of the arguments given by him in Book I.

In addition to the direct references to Thrasymachus in the dialectic enquiry in the *Republic*, there would appear to be a number of indirect references to him. These seem to be designed to make the reader wary of Thrasymachus' character and they attempt to undermine the arguments that he gives in Book I in support of the tyrant and tyranny. During the course of the enquiry into unjust states and souls in Books VIII and IX, Socrates describes tyranny and the tyrant as the worst type of state and individual. He claims that the tyrant is controlled by unnecessary desires rather than reason and is essentially a criminal type. He also argues that the tyrant would be the least happy type of character (562a-588a).

In Book IX, Socrates provides the illustration of the three headed creature (588b-589c). This creature consists of a man representing reason, a lion representing spirit and a beast representing appetite. Outwardly, the creature takes on the appearance of the man. Socrates asserts that when we argue that it is better to be unjust rather than just, we are saying that it is better to let the beast, backed up by the lion, take on control rather than the man. In this example, the reader will note that Socrates relies on illustration to defeat Thrasymachus' position. This illustration reminds the reader of Thrasymachus' entry into the discussion in Book I where Socrates describes him as acting like a wild beast.

In Book X, Socrates relates the Myth of Er. In this myth, we are told of the severe punishment that the tyrants, who are said to be 'incurably wicked', would receive in the afterlife. They would receive worse punishment than any of the other character types.

This would include being bound hand, foot and neck and being impaled on thorns and eventually being flung into Tartarus (615e-616a). In comparison, the souls of the just would be rewarded in the afterlife. It is important to note Socrates' reliance on myth here to attack Thrasymachus' position.

It has been asserted by some that Thrasymachus' character is dominated by *thumos* or spirit which later emerges as the dominant characteristic of the auxiliaries in the ideal city, as outlined in the discussion in *Republic* Book IV concerning the just city and soul.⁴⁷ The evidence provided to back up this argument includes: the images used in connection with Thrasymachus in the *Republic* Book I; Thrasymachus' bad temper and argumentative impulse; Thrasymachus' interpretation of Socrates' motives in the discussion and; the content of his arguments. Other commentators have also argued that the anger and shame displayed by Thrasymachus in *Republic* Book I make *thumos* a strong feature of the personality of Thrasymachus.⁴⁸

These commentators appear to be right in one respect but wrong in another. I would agree that Thrasymachus is closely linked to one of the character types described later in the *Republic*. I would also agree that Thrasymachus did display a notable degree of spirit in his character and that this was evident in the discussion with Socrates in Book I. However, I would suggest that, it was not spirit that dominated Thrasymachus' character but the element of uncontrollable appetite. This was later found to be the dominant characteristic of the tyrannical character as outlined by Socrates (571a-576b, Book IX). Thrasymachus displays a lack of respect towards Socrates in the discussion. In addition, he displays a single-mindedness and a lack of co-operation which are representative of the tyrant.⁴⁹ Most importantly, Thrasymachus did not align himself with Socrates, as would be representative of the auxiliaries in the ideal state, who would be dominated by spirit. Instead, Thrasymachus took on a combative approach against Socrates in their exchange in Book I. In my view, the character Socrates represents the guardians in the ideal state and the character Thrasymachus is representative of the tyrant as described by Socrates in his discussion of unjust states and souls in *Republic* Books VIII and IX.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ This point is made by Wilson (1995, pp. 58-67).

⁴⁸ Blondell 2002, p. 182.

⁴⁹ Aune 1997, p. 306.

⁵⁰ In Book I, 344a, Thrasymachus is explicit about 'tyranny' as the desirable end.

Wilson argues that 'The desire for power springs from *thumos* and has great destructive potential.'⁵¹ Here I think Wilson is mixing up the dominant characteristics of the auxiliaries and the tyrant. In the ideal state the auxiliaries would be dominated by the element of spirit and this would enable them to fight for and defend the rule of the guardians. Whereas in the unjust state the tyrant, who is dominated by uncontrollable appetite, would be the one who would seek to gain power and would have great destructive potential.

Early in Book VIII, Socrates observes that in time the ideal state would decay. He says that 'since all created things must decay, even a social order of this kind cannot last for all time, but must decline' (546a). In the course of Books VIII and IX, Socrates provides a detailed account of how the dissolution of the ideal state would come about. We are told that the ideal state would deteriorate firstly into a timarchy, then into an oligarchy, then a democracy, and eventually into a tyranny. Likewise, the ideal soul would no longer be controlled by reason. Instead, it would eventually be led by unnecessary desires, as in the case of the tyrant. Socrates also puts forward the theory that the tyrant would be the least just and least happy type of person.⁵²

Importantly, at the end of Book IX and towards the end of the dialectic enquiry into the nature of justice in the *Republic*, Socrates and Glaucon who is acting as respondent at this point, express doubt about the possibility of the ideal state, ever becoming a reality on earth. Socrates then observes 'Perhaps, it is laid up as a pattern in heaven, where he who wishes can see it and found it in his own heart' (592b) and Glaucon agrees with him. This puts in doubt all the positive theories that have been advanced by Socrates, Glaucon and Adeimantus since the beginning of the dialectic enquiry at 368a, Book II. Interestingly, in Book X before the Myth of Er, Socrates and the respondents consider the rewards of goodness in this life (612a-613e). In this discussion, we are told that the good person will be rewarded for doing good. Notably, in Book II, part 1, Glaucon and Adeimantus put forward the argument that the just would not be rewarded. Significantly, Socrates and the respondents do not make any reference to the ideal state and soul at this point of the enquiry in Book X.

⁵¹ Wilson 1995, p. 67.

⁵² The significance of the deterioration of the ideal state and soul is considered in more detail in chapter 3 of this enquiry.

Despite Thrasymachus' silence at the end of the *Republic*, the reader is not convinced that he has been fully defeated by Socrates. We are left wondering why Plato organised the dialogue in this way and what message he is trying to give. The discussion of imperfect states and souls in Books VIII and IX leaves the reader with the strong impression that Plato may have thought that it was inevitable that the ideal state would deteriorate into a tyranny. Indeed, that is, if the ideal state was ever established in the first place. This, together with the direct and indirect references to Thrasymachus in the dialectic enquiry, suggest that the arguments outlined by Thrasymachus in Book I are still very much alive at the end of the discussion in the *Republic*.

- The relationship between *Republic* Book I and the remaining Books of the dialogue

In addition to the links between the depiction of Thrasymachus in Book I and the rest of the *Republic*, as outlined above, Book I contains other examples of anticipation of themes and theses that are developed further in the later books.⁵³ The examples of anticipation of themes and theses in Book I identified by Kahn lead him to conclude that *Republic* Book I was composed as an integrated part of the *Republic* and not as an earlier separate dialogue.⁵⁴ The examples of anticipation given by Kahn are convincing and they do suggest that Book I was designed as an integrated part of the *Republic*. It is also possible that the links between *Republic* Book I and the remaining Books were drawn up by Plato when he was composing Books II to X rather than having been fully worked out when composing Book I. If this were the case, Book I could have been designed to brainstorm the issue of justice and lay the foundation for the composition of the remaining books. Alternatively, Plato could have started any of the Books of the *Republic* first and then designed the other Books around that Book.

For his own reasons, Plato presented the *Republic* with Books I to X included. It was his intention that the reader should experience the elenchus exchanges in Book I

before the dialectic enquiry of the later books. What message can we take from this?

⁵³ Kahn (1993, pp. 136-140) provides a number of useful examples of 'prolepsis' or anticipation of themes and theses between Book I and the remaining Books of the *Republic*. Kahn (1993, pp. 140-142) also alerts the reader to a number of interesting links between the later Books of the *Republic*.

⁵⁴ Kahn 1993, p. 139.

By following the process of the elenchus between Socrates and the respondents in Book I, the reader is given the opportunity to join Plato in his quest for an understanding of justice. We are also given an appreciation of the strengths and weaknesses of the elenchus method of enquiry as depicted in Book I. This prepares the reader for the display oration from Glaucon and Adeimantus in Book II, part I, and the move to the dialectic method of enquiry which is adopted by Socrates from Book II, 368a onwards. The fact that Plato moves from one method of enquiry to another in the *Republic* gives the reader an appreciation of his ongoing quest to find the best method to be used in the attempt to gain knowledge.

Some have argued that Book I could be removed from the *Republic* without having any substantial impact on the success of the arguments outlined in the remaining Books. The justification given for this view is that Books II to X can be understood without Book I and that Book I appears to be an introduction to what follows rather than an integral part of the work. A further justification given for this view is that the challenge put forward by Glaucon in *Republic* Book II is far more powerful than the challenge advanced by Thrasymachus in Book I.⁵⁵ This is a very negative view concerning the significance of *Republic* Book I within the overall work. In my opinion, Book I plays a crucial role in the *Republic* as a whole. The challenge given by Thrasymachus in Book I is particularly important because it inspired Glaucon and Adeimantus to put forward their challenge to Socrates in Book II. Without Book I, where would Glaucon and Adeimantus have got their inspiration from? Without the challenge from Glaucon and Adeimantus in Book II, it is uncertain what the focus of the remaining Books of the *Republic* would have been. Also, the ongoing presence of Thrasymachus in the *Republic* overall, as discussed above, suggests that Book I is an integral part of the *Republic*.⁵⁶

At the end of Book I, the *Republic* could have concluded without a resolution as happens typically in the early dialogues of Plato, for example, *Laches* where they

⁵⁵ This view is advanced by Everson (1998, pp. 126-127). Chappell (2000, p. 101) expresses sympathy with Everson's view concerning the importance of Glaucon's challenge in Book II.

⁵⁶ Blondell (2002, pp. 196-197) observes that in Book I Plato exploits Socrates' role as narrator in order to discredit Thrasymachus' views by associating them negatively with his character. However, in Book II, the interruptions from Glaucon and Adeimantus alert the reader to the fact that, rather than being extremist, the views of justice outlined by Thrasymachus in Book I were representative of many ordinary people and sophists. Blondell (2002, pp. 244-245) suggests another relevance of *Republic* Book I. She argues that by including the elenchus exchanges in Book I, Plato was able to show dramatically that the change to the dialectic method was a response to the inadequacies associated with the elenchus style of enquiry.

had not found out what courage was comprised of and *Protagoras* where they had not identified what the nature of excellence was and whether it could be taught. However, Plato did not choose this way forward for the *Republic* and instead it includes a total of ten Books. It becomes clear in the next Book, that the overall structure and content of the *Republic* as a whole is very different from the earlier dialogues of Plato. Vlastos asserts that in his middle dialogues Plato 'proceeds to disengage Socrates from the elenchus' and 'the moralist of the earlier dialogues becomes the metaphysician and epistemologist of the middle ones.'⁵⁷

There are a number of differing views concerning Vlastos' assertion that Plato changed his approach in the middle dialogues. Some have argued against Vlastos' position and claimed that Plato's basic view remained the same in the early, middle and late dialogues.⁵⁸ Some disagree with Vlastos that the change from the elenchus in Book I to the dialectic in Book II is also a change from the Socratic method to Plato's new method of enquiry. The reason given for this view is that although the character Socrates appears to be closer to the historical Socrates in the early dialogues, it is not possible to confirm this thesis.⁵⁹ It is suggested that a more positive approach would be to view the Socrates of the earlier dialogues as representing the young Plato who later goes on to write the middle and later works and I think this is plausible.⁶⁰ Notably, some other commentators do not support any developmental interpretations of the *Republic* and the other works of Plato.⁶¹

Other commentators have put forward the thesis that the elenchus method of enquiry adopted by Socrates in *Republic* Book I does not change in a significant way and that Socrates continues to use this method in the later Books. The justification given for holding this view is that *Republic* Book I is not exclusively negative and the later

⁵⁷ Vlastos 1995, p. 37.

⁵⁸ Rowe (2007, pp. 41-53) argues against Vlastos' position. With regard to the *Republic* as a whole, Rowe (2007, p. 53) asserts that 'Plato retains the basic Socratic view that, as rational beings, it is the *real good* that we desire, and the *real good* that it is in all our interests to discover.'

⁵⁹ Kahn 1992, p. 257.

⁶⁰ Kahn 1992, pp. 257-258.

⁶¹ Nails (1995, pp. 53-135) gives a strong criticism of the developmental interpretation of Plato's dialogues. According to the developmental thesis: Plato's philosophical theories developed over his lifetime; it is possible for scholars to determine the chronological order of the composition of the dialogues of Plato; and the character Socrates in the early dialogues of Plato is representative of the historical Socrates, whilst the character of Socrates in the middle and later works represents the view of Plato. Blondell (2002, pp. 1-37) eschews the developmental interpretation of Plato's dialogues.

books are not exclusively constructive.⁶² This position is justified by the claim that *Republic* Book II onwards has a negative aspect in that it is a type of elenchus against Thrasymachus' original position in Book I, which was defended by Glaucon and Adeimantus in Book II. Also, it is claimed that there is a positive aspect to Plato's portrayal of Cephalus, Polemarchus and Thrasymachus and that, in Book I, Plato is not just concerned with showing Socrates winning arguments. It is asserted that the character types in Book I have a positive input into the *Republic* as a whole in that they feed into the character types as outlined by Socrates in the later Books of the *Republic*. The suggestion is made that Socrates represents the guardians, Polemarchus the auxiliaries, and Cephalus the workers as described in Book IV, and Thrasymachus the tyrant as described in Book IX.⁶³

I am not fully convinced by the thesis presented by Aune. I agree that the content of Book I feeds into the content of the later Books of the *Republic*. I also agree with the connections put forward in relation to the characters Socrates, Cephalus and Thrasymachus. However, I would suggest that Polemarchus represents the workers rather than the auxiliaries in the ideal state. This is because of his lack of spirit and ability in the elenchus exchange with Socrates. Also, unlike the auxiliaries as outlined in the *Republic* who would be expected to give support to the guardians in their new role as leaders, Polemarchus, like his father, did not have any of the political or military obligations of a citizen due to his metic status. Also, against Aune, I would argue that in Books II to X of the *Republic* Socrates does not adopt a type of elenchus exchange.

The dialectic method of enquiry adopted by Socrates from Book II, 368a onwards, does have a number of similarities to the elenchus method of Book I. These include the continued use of the dialogue form and the question and answer format. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that in *Republic* Book II onwards, the character Socrates advances substantial philosophical theories and this is not a feature of Book I. The dialectic method is considered in chapter 3 of this enquiry.

⁶² Aune 1997, pp. 306-308.

⁶³ For a discussion concerning the connections between *Republic* Book I and the subsequent Books, see Aune (1997, pp. 298-302).

Conclusion

The input from Cephalus, Polemarchus and especially Thrasymachus in Book I has proved to be negative because it has not moved the overall enquiry into justice in the *Republic* forward. The increased dramatic tension has been introduced at a time when the philosophical enquiry has come to a sudden stop. Socrates' reaction to Thrasymachus' rude interruption is interesting. What can Plato's reason be for this? Is it that he simply cannot accept the thesis represented by Thrasymachus that injustice is superior to justice. There must be a means to demonstrate that Thrasymachus has got this wrong. But, the elenchus method of enquiry is proving inadequate for this task. Indeed, we appear to have a situation where the character Socrates believes the things he says in the latter part of Book I are true (and Plato does too). But, Socrates is unhappy with the way he has tried to prove these points.

In the early dialogues, Socrates adopts the elenchus method to bring to light any inconsistent beliefs that the respondent may have. But, the elenchus also appears to aim to make the respondent feel ashamed at having his or her ignorance made public. This should give the respondent a strong incentive to review his or her beliefs and therefore have a positive influence on the respondent.⁶⁴ It is notable that although Socrates highlights the fact that Thrasymachus blushes in shame at being put down by him in Book I, the elenchus exchange with Socrates did not result in Thrasymachus reviewing his beliefs (350d). It took another nine Books of the *Republic* for Socrates to attempt to defeat Thrasymachus by setting out to demonstrate, through the dialectic method of enquiry, that the theory of justice advanced by Thrasymachus would lead to unhappiness for the individual in this life and in the next one. This is the opposite of what Thrasymachus asserted in *Republic* Book I. Despite Thrasymachus' silence at the end of the *Republic*, the reader is not convinced that the arguments advanced by Thrasymachus have been fully defeated by Socrates.

Unlike Glaucon and Adeimantus, who despite their strong input in Book II and their key interruptions in Books V and VI, take part in a mainly co-operative enquiry with Socrates into justice, Thrasymachus advances his own strongly held theory of justice and he is taken aback and angry with the outcome of his elenchus exchange with

⁶⁴ Brickhouse and Smith (1991, p. 153-154) raise this point. They also note that this does not always work and some respondents get angry.

Socrates.⁶⁵ However, unlike Cephalus, Thrasymachus stays on to hear the rest of the enquiry into justice after Book II of the *Republic*. This suggests to the reader that Plato realised that if the just state, as outlined in *Republic* Book IV, was ever to get underway people like Thrasymachus with strong and inflexible views of their own would need to be persuaded of the benefits that the ideal state would bring to society as a whole.

At the end of *Republic* Book I we are left with the strong impression that the reader is not supposed to be satisfied with the outcome of the enquiry so far. The discussions in Book I have not provided an answer to the original question: what is justice? This becomes apparent in the closing words of Socrates in Book I. He admits at the end of the discussion with Thrasymachus that he still does not know what justice is. 'For so long as I don't know what justice is I'm hardly likely to find out whether it is an excellence or not, or whether it makes a man happy or unhappy' (354b). He notes that in the discussion he got carried away enquiring into the particular examples concerning justice put forward by the respondents rather than focusing on the core question: what is justice (354b)? Notably, as happened in the interchange with Thrasymachus, the elenchus exchanges between Socrates and Cephalus and Socrates and Polemarchus also alerted the reader to weaknesses in the elenchus method of enquiry adopted by Socrates.

In relation to the transition from Book I to Book II of the *Republic*, Thrasymachus could have provided a more complex argument for injustice by portraying the unjust person as someone who acts justly or unjustly according to when it is to his or her advantage to do so, rather than someone who always gives priority to injustice. This is the approach taken by Glaucon and Adeimantus in the *Republic* Book II, which is considered in the next chapter of this enquiry.

⁶⁵ The interventions from Glaucon and Adeimantus are considered in chapters 2, 4 and 5 of this enquiry.

Chapter 2

Glaucon and Adeimantus: The display oration method and a challenge to Socrates

Introduction

There are a number of highly dramatic interruptions made by Glaucon and Adeimantus in *Republic* Book II, part I, (357a-367e). These are introduced at a time when the enquiry into justice in Book I has ended inconclusively and Socrates has expressed disappointment at the outcome of the enquiry so far. Also, Thrasymachus has displayed anger in the enquiry in Book I.¹ In their interruptions in Book II, Glaucon and Adeimantus display a high level of understanding of the issues relating to justice and injustice that were raised by the respondents in Book I.

In section 1, this chapter considers the significance of the interruptions made by Glaucon and Adeimantus in Book II, part 1, and what may have prompted them to interrupt at this stage of the dialogue. In sections 2 and 3, it looks in detail at the arguments advanced by Glaucon and Adeimantus. It also reflects upon the response made by Socrates to these arguments and the role that he plays in this part of the *Republic*. In section 4, consideration is given to some wider issues relating to Book II, part 1, and especially its relation to Book I and Book X, part 2, of the dialogue. This chapter highlights the importance of Book II, part 1, within the *Republic* as a whole.

(Section 1)

The dramatic entry of Glaucon and Adeimantus into the enquiry and what has prompted this development

In the second Book of the *Republic*, the reader and audience in the background are unexpectedly introduced to a new set of participants in the discussion and a new style of enquiry: the display oration method. It is notable that although Socrates continues to feature in Book II, part 1, his role changes temporarily from that of questioner to respondent, with Glaucon and Adeimantus taking the lead in the discussion. Glaucon and Adeimantus join Socrates in his search for an understanding of justice from Book II

¹ *Republic* Book I is considered in detail in chapter 1 of this enquiry.

onwards of the *Republic*.² But, they make their most dramatic entry in Book II, part 1, with Glaucon speaking up first, followed by Adeimantus. Neither of these respondents is convinced by the arguments put forward by Socrates in Book I. They believe that Thrasymachus has not been fully defeated as yet.³ They reformulate Thrasymachus' argument and provide a fresh challenge to Socrates. This leads the reader to question why this change has been introduced. It would appear that in Book II Plato is attempting to move on from the inconclusive outcome of the elenchus enquiry in Book I, in an ongoing attempt to find out the nature of justice. The 'new start' also suggests that the Book I arguments regarding *techné* and skill are regarded by the character Socrates as now inadequate.

Socrates is taken aback, but claims to be 'delighted' when Glaucon and Adeimantus advance their challenge to him (368a). This can be compared with Socrates' reaction to the entry of Thrasymachus into the enquiry in *Republic* Book I where he claims to be 'panic-stricken' (336b). Also, it can be compared with the end of Book I, where Thrasymachus continues to display some rudeness towards Socrates and Socrates admits, with disappointment, that he has not reached an understanding concerning the nature of justice (354a-b).

The reaction of Socrates to Glaucon and Adeimantus is surprising considering the controversial nature of the arguments given by them in Book II, part 1, and the enormous challenge that they put to Socrates. However, according to Socrates, Glaucon displays his 'customary pertinacity' here by insisting that the matter be considered further (357a-b). In Book II, Adeimantus supplements what Glaucon has asserted concerning the notion of justice. He then challenges Socrates to provide a theory of justice that would defend it against the theories outlined in favour of acting unjustly in Book I and Book II, part 1. Socrates appears to be more at ease with Glaucon and Adeimantus than he was with Thrasymachus and this suggests that they

² As noted in the typology of key respondents in the introductory chapter of this study, in Book II, part 1 of the *Republic*, Glaucon and Adeimantus fit into the category of capable, sympathetic and challenging respondents. It is worth observing that Glaucon makes a brief entry into the elenchus enquiry in Book I where he says to Socrates 'I recognize your two kinds of reward, but I don't know what the punishment is or in what sense you speak of it as pay' (347a).

³ This point is made by Irwin (1995, p. 181). Irwin (1995, p. 198) also observes that since Glaucon and Adeimantus believe that the question of what justice consists in has not been answered satisfactorily as yet, this includes the arguments advanced by Socrates in *Republic* Book I. The importance of the role of Thrasymachus in the *Republic* as a whole is considered in chapter 1 of this study.

may be in a better position to make progress in their enquiry into justice.⁴

From Book II in the *Republic*, Glaucon and Adeimantus are depicted as two respondents who are anxious to establish the truth concerning the nature of justice and who are prepared to speak up if they think that any of the conclusions are being reached too hastily. With regard to the transition from Book I to Book II of the *Republic*, there is a notable change in style and mood from the aggressive challenge from Thrasymachus in Book I to the calm but insistent and more systematic challenge from Glaucon and Adeimantus in Book II.⁵ Although Glaucon and Adeimantus surprise Socrates by challenging him, they do seem to be sincere in their desire to establish the facts concerning justice. Glaucon and Adeimantus do not demonstrate any ill feeling towards Thrasymachus. This suggests that they appreciate that Thrasymachus was sincere but less persistent than they are in putting forward his theory of justice. However, they hope to find a more positive theory of justice through their enquiry with Socrates.

Some have argued that Glaucon and Adeimantus are portrayed in the *Republic* overall as 'able and vigorous' with Glaucon playing a more dominant role than Adeimantus.⁶ It should be noted however that although Glaucon features in more of the discussion with Socrates from Book II, 368a onwards, Adeimantus is responsible for advancing more of the dramatic interruptions in the dialectic enquiry than Glaucon. The interruptions from Adeimantus and Glaucon are considered in chapters 4 and 5 of this study.

Another point to note is that although the characters of Glaucon and Adeimantus come across as real individuals in the dialogue, the reader needs to bear in mind that Glaucon and Adeimantus and the other characters in the *Republic* are inventions of Plato which he builds into the work for his purposes. Also, despite the fact that they are Plato's inventions, we cannot assume that any of the characters in the *Republic* necessarily represent Plato's viewpoint in the dialogues, or the viewpoint of the

⁴ It is worth noting that at 358c, it becomes apparent to the reader that Glaucon is acting as a devil's advocate and he does not believe the theories that he is advancing. At 367b, we are alerted to the same fact concerning Adeimantus.

⁵ Rutherford 1995, p. 206.

⁶ Tarrant 1955, p. 87.

person that they are named after.⁷ Nevertheless, the fact that Plato wrote the dialogues means that he took a personal interest in the matters considered in the dialogues and the progress and outcome of the discussion.⁸ These issues are considered in the introductory chapter of this enquiry.

In Book II, part 1, Glaucon makes it clear that he is not satisfied with the outcome of the discussion between Socrates and Thrasymachus in Book I. He states 'For you seem to have fascinated Thrasymachus into a premature submission, like a snake charmer; but I am not satisfied yet about justice and injustice' (358b). Glaucon puts forward three kinds of good and he asks Socrates which category he would place justice in (357b-d):

1. For its own sake: for example, enjoyment or pleasure.
2. For its own sake and for its consequences: for example, wisdom, sight and health.
3. For its consequences: for example, medical treatment and exercise.⁹

Socrates asserts that he would place justice in the second of the categories of goods given by Glaucon: for its own sake and for its consequences (358a) and he refers to this as the highest category.¹⁰ Glaucon is surprised by this response from Socrates and he observes that most people would place justice in the third category of goods: for its consequences. By breaking justice into three categories, Glaucon defines the boundaries of the enquiry and makes it more focused. He also enables Socrates to

⁷ This point is made by Frede (1992, p. 214). Also, Blondell (2002, p. 36) argues that we cannot take the discussions in the dialogue to be authentic historical conversations. Poster (2001, p. 2) observes that the reader needs to bear in mind that although the characters in the *Republic*, including Socrates, come across as real people in the dialogue, they are literary devices created by Plato for his own purposes. Waterfield (2000, pp. 270-276) provides a useful translation and commentary on some fragments of the historical sophist Thrasymachus of Chalcedon which differ from the theories advanced by the character Thrasymachus in *Republic* Book I.

⁸ Kosman (1992, pp. 73-92) considers some difficulties in interpreting Plato's dialogues due to the fact that Plato does not feature in them.

⁹ It is surprising that Glaucon advances three kinds of good that justice can be placed in as Thrasymachus did not suggest that justice was any type of good for the individual who acts justly. Nevertheless, in his role as devil's advocate in Book II, part 1, Glaucon proceeds to speak out in favour of injustice.

¹⁰ Annas (1981, pp. 63-64) observes that in *Republic* Book II Socrates offers a genuine alternative to the deontological (good for its own sake) and consequentialist (good for its consequences) theories of justice which have dominated more recent moral debates. Emlyn-Jones (2007, pp. 171-172) provides a useful commentary on the three classes of goods outlined by Glaucon in Book II, part 1, and on Socrates' choice of the second category of good.

make a positive statement concerning justice and where he stands on this issue. This is a significant advance from Book I, where Socrates was unable to provide a theory of justice.¹¹ Indeed, the reader is surprised at the speed in which Socrates is able to identify the category of good in which justice should be placed in Book II, part 1. There is a change from the heated and competitive encounters in Book I to a more productive and in-depth investigation into the nature of justice. Glaucon and Adeimantus prove to be more suitable respondents than Thrasymachus because they are prepared to give consideration to the arguments in favour of justice as well as injustice.¹²

It is surprising that, unlike the elenchus method as displayed in Book I, Socrates does not ask Glaucon and Adeimantus for their own views in Book II after they have given the view concerning justice that is widely held among the people.¹³ It suggests that Glaucon and Adeimantus, as depicted in *Republic* Book II, part 1, do not hold any strong and properly argued views of their own concerning justice. This has put them in a vulnerable position and has meant that they are in danger of being persuaded by the popular view of justice that is held by members of the community. One of Plato's aims in advancing the theory of the just state and just soul, in *Republic* Book IV, is to ensure that the members of the community who do not have knowledge of justice, that is, the workers and auxiliaries, are placed under the rule of the guardians who would aspire to possess such knowledge. This alerts the reader to the fact that, in writing the *Republic*, Plato was prepared to advance controversial and unconventional theories concerning justice.

¹¹ Irwin (1995, p. 198) observes that the threefold division of goods is a new development in *Republic* Book II and it does not appear in the earlier dialogues of Plato.

¹² It is worth noting that although Socrates is unable to provide a theory of justice in Book I, he does make some progress in identifying the nature of justice. At 354a, he states that 'the just man is happy, and the unjust man is miserable.'

¹³ The reader can appreciate that Glaucon and Adeimantus agree broadly with Socrates' conception of justice. However, Socrates has not yet advanced the theory of the ideal state and soul, so Glaucon and Adeimantus have no precise theories to agree with at this stage of the enquiry.

(Section 2)

The display oration by Glaucon

The negative outcome of the elenchus method in Book I leads to Glaucon challenging Socrates by providing a notion of justice which is based on the principle that humans are fundamentally selfish.¹⁴ This, we are told, is not Glaucon's view, but one that is widely held within the community and which has been inspired by Thrasymachus and many others (358c).¹⁵ Here, Glaucon makes a connection between the arguments advanced by Thrasymachus in *Republic* Book I and the theory that he is now putting forward in Book II. The fact that Glaucon's arguments in support of injustice have been inspired by Thrasymachus, reminds the audience and reader of the strength of Thrasymachus' presence in the dialogue and of the theory of justice outlined by him in Book I. Glaucon argues that he has never heard justice being defended against such views to his satisfaction and that he proposes to 'state forcibly, the argument in praise of injustice' in order to give Socrates a model to follow when he is given his turn to provide an argument in favour of justice (358d).¹⁶

Socrates accepts this challenge from Glaucon in good spirit. This suggests that the approach taken by Glaucon in introducing his argument has had a positive influence on Socrates. It has also enabled them to move on from the inconclusive end of the enquiry in Book I. It becomes necessary for Plato to change from the elenchus method after Book I because this method only works if the respondent is convinced of the view that he is putting forward and this does not apply in the case of Glaucon and Adeimantus in Book II, part 1.¹⁷ If Glaucon had not intervened at this stage of the enquiry, it is difficult to envisage how Socrates could have been shown to revive the enquiry into justice after Book I. I disagree with Kraut (2002, p. 4) where he asserts that Plato does not intend the reader and audience to interpret the Socrates of Book II

¹⁴ In this part of the *Republic*, Plato is using the formal sophistic method (*epideixis*) for Glaucon to outline an essentially sophistic position.

¹⁵ Interestingly, in this example, Plato is using one of his characters, that is Glaucon, to give a view which we are told has been inspired by another of his characters, that is Thrasymachus. In this example, the sophist Antiphon appears to be one of the other people that Socrates refers to. Waterfield (2000, pp. 258-269) provides a useful translation and commentary on some fragments of the historical sophist Antiphon. The dialogue form of presentation and the fact that the reader can identify so closely with the views advanced by the respondents in the *Republic* make it difficult to appreciate that the characters are not real. This issue is considered in the introductory chapter of this enquiry.

¹⁶ Kirwan (1965, pp. 162-173) provides a useful analysis of the challenge advanced by Glaucon in *Republic* Book II.

¹⁷ Blondell 2002, p. 190.

as having a new character and a new method of enquiry.¹⁸ The only other way forward for Socrates would have been to ask Glaucon and Adeimantus for their own opinions concerning justice and to hold elenchus enquiries with them. But, this does not appear to be a viable option in early Book II, as Glaucon and Adeimantus have not provided any strong opinions of their own.¹⁹

Glaucon divides his defence of injustice into three headings.

a) The nature and origin of justice

Glaucon claims that people only agree to adhere to the conventional rules of justice as a matter of convenience and for their own personal gain in the form of external benefits. This includes, for example, acquiring a good reputation and respect from others leading to lucrative business deals. He claims to see no advantage associated with seeking justice, in itself, for any internal benefits which it may bring, such as a just soul, separate to its consequences. Glaucon asserts that justice 'lies between what is most desirable, to do wrong and avoid punishment, and what is most undesirable, to suffer wrong without being able to get redress; justice lies between these two and is accepted not as being good in itself, but as having a relative value due to our inability to do wrong' and get away with it (359a, Book II). This can be contrasted with the guardian in the ideal state, as outlined by Socrates in *Republic* Book IV, who will act for the good of the state overall. Admittedly, this will include the guardian's own self-interest, but not exclusively, and it is not intended to be the main aim of the ideal state as outlined by Socrates.²⁰

According to this line of argument, in a given situation, people choose to act justly because it can benefit them to do so. Nevertheless, they would rather act unjustly, if

¹⁸ The change in approach by Socrates and the respondents in Book II as discussed above suggests that there is not as much continuity between Book I and Book II as Kraut claims. I would suggest that Book II has been inspired by Book I but that it moves the enquiry forward in a new direction of its own.

¹⁹ It is notable that at 347e, Book I, Glaucon simply agrees that the just man's life would pay better, without argument with Socrates. Therefore, an elenchus exchange would not work at this point in the dialogue because the respondent would have to start from a position that Socrates could refute.

²⁰ This appears to be a reference forward to 417b-419a in early Book IV where Adeimantus observes that the guardians will not be acting in their self-interest. Adeimantus asks Socrates 'how would you answer the objection that you aren't making your guardians particularly happy?'

they could get away with it.²¹ Therefore, as a means of self-protection men have decided to form agreements and make laws in order to set basic standards of behaviour within the community (359a). These laws and agreements work for the benefit of the individual and the community as a whole in promoting peaceful coexistence. The new laws encourage people to act justly.²² However, there is an important point being put forward by Glaucon in this argument. The laws and agreements reached within the community can change over time. Therefore, the concept of justice is relative, that is, dependent on what is agreed by the community. As a result of this, the concept of justice is subject to change.²³ This could leave the community vulnerable if the form of rule were to change within the city, for example, if it changed from being a democracy to a tyranny. Also, as there is a need to compromise and form agreements, no members of the community are fully satisfied with the outcome.

b) Men act justly because they cannot get away with being unjust

Glaucon continues his defence of injustice by asserting that men do not value justice for its own sake but for its good consequences. As a result of this, men only adhere to the laws and agreements made within the community because they cannot get away with disobeying them (359b). In order to illustrate this point, we are given the vivid and dramatic story of Gyges' ring by Glaucon (359d-360b). This story, together with the follow-up discussion at 360c-d, is designed to illustrate the point that if men were put in the position where they would be able to act unjustly and get away with it, that is, still appear to be just, they would follow this course of action. This story adds dramatic weight to the arguments already put forward by Glaucon and brings it to the attention of the reader and audience. Philosophically, it alerts the reader and audience in the background to the fact that in order to find out what justice consists in there will be a need to look beyond the everyday experience of the agent to a higher realm of thought. This prepares the reader for the discussion of the Forms, and the other images, including the Myth of Er, which are introduced by Socrates later in the

²¹ Harman (1977, pp. 137-151) alerts the reader to some problems associated with the fact that the egoistic agent who is only interested in his or her own good and pleasure may on occasions find it in their self-interest to act morally.

²² Irwin 1995, p. 183.

²³ It is notable that in *Republic* Book II, 368a onwards, Socrates provides a theory of justice that is based on knowledge of the Forms, which according to Socrates, are not subject to change.

Republic.²⁴ In section 4 of this chapter, consideration is given to some connections between Book II, part 1 and the Myth of Er in Book X.

According to this story narrated by Glaucon, Gyges was a shepherd in the service of the King of Lydia. One day when he was at work 'there was a great storm and an earthquake,' 'and a chasm opened in the earth' (359d). When he entered the chasm he saw many fantastic things but he took just one object, a ring from a corpse and then he left the chasm. Some time later, Gyges discovered accidentally that the ring had magical powers and that it could make him invisible. He used this to his advantage and 'seduced the queen, and with her help attacked and murdered the king and seized the throne' (359e-360b). Glaucon asserts that if they had such a ring both the just and unjust man would take advantage of the magical powers of the ring. He concludes that the just man would not have the strength of will to avoid this temptation. In this example, Glaucon has made a further link between Thrasymachus' argument in Book I where he puts forward the tyrant as the perfect example of the superiority of injustice (344b-c). The magical power of the ring has enabled Gyges to act unjustly and get away with it, resulting in him taking over the throne. Like the tyrant as outlined by Thrasymachus (344b-c), Gyges has now gained the respect and fear of the people. Notably, Gyges would be seen by the people to be just, whilst the tyrant as described by Thrasymachus, would be considered to be unjust.²⁵

c) A contrast between extreme examples of just and unjust men

In his defence of injustice, Glaucon gives some extreme examples of the lives of the just and unjust man (360e-362c). The unjust man acts unjustly, but he does this in such a way as to appear to be just. Therefore, the unjust man gains the rewards for his unjust deeds and also the rewards for appearing to be just, that is, a good reputation and associated honours. Glaucon notes that 'the most accomplished form of injustice is to seem just when you are not' and that the unjust man must be 'perfect in his wickedness' (361a). Glaucon's account of the life of the unjust man is persuasive

²⁴ Von Reden and Goldhill (1999. p. 263) consider the significance of images such as the cave in the *Republic* Book VII.

²⁵ An important difference between the theories advanced by Thrasymachus and Glaucon is that in the case of Thrasymachus there is no pretence: the stronger are simply happier because they gain the upper hand and everybody knows it. However, Glaucon introduces the polarity reality/seeming with regard to justice. According to Glaucon, the unjust can seem to be just and so get all the advantages of this.

and the reader is left with the strong impression that the unjust life is an attractive proposition. Glaucon notes that the unjust man will be in a position to make impressive sacrifices to the gods and he suggests that 'it is reasonable to suppose that the gods care more for him than for the just man' (362c).

The account of justice outlined by Glaucon appears to be somewhat unsustainable. Perhaps, a city could accommodate some of its citizens acting unjustly and getting away with this behaviour. But, if all the people acted in this way, it would not be sustainable in the long term. At some time in the future, the value of appearing to act justly, would be undermined, as the pretence of the unjust citizens would start to become transparent. This would apply in particular to the unjust person living in a small community where the pretence of acting justly would become apparent to the community more quickly.²⁶ Glaucon's example of the unjust man is in some ways less attractive to the reader and more underhand than the examples given by Thrasymachus. In the examples from Thrasymachus, the unjust man does not hide his injustice and he does not seek to appear to be just. Instead, he is proud of his injustice and so, in a sense, is more sincere.

In contrast with this, we are given an extreme example of the life of the just person. Glaucon gives a very unattractive picture of the life of the just man. We are told that the just man acts justly but that he must avoid appearing to be just. This is so that he cannot be accused of acting justly for the material benefits and honour that it would give him, rather than being just for its own sake (361c). As a result of this, the just man will have a tough life with material discomfort and he will be looked down upon by the people as a whole. Glaucon notes that in the extreme case 'the just man, as we have pictured him, will be scourged, tortured, and imprisoned, his eyes will be put out, and after enduring every humiliation he will be crucified' (361e-362a). This gives the reader and audience a very vivid picture of the suffering of the just man in this life. It is clear from this example that it would require an enormous amount of commitment from the just man to carry on acting justly. This is brought out in Socrates' reaction to Glaucon's extreme examples of the life of the unjust and just man. Socrates observes 'you're putting the finishing touches to your two pictures as vigorously as if you were getting them ready for an exhibition' (361d).

²⁶ Irwin 1995, p. 184.

There appears to be an element of parody or satire associated with Socrates' reaction at 361d to Glaucon's portrayal of the extreme 'just man'. However, it is worth noting that in other parts of the *Republic*, Socrates provides extreme accounts of the fate of the unjust man. Examples of these include the discussion of unjust states and souls in Books VIII and IX and the Myth of Er in Book X.

It is worth observing that at this point Glaucon reminds the reader and audience that this is not his view but the opinion of those who praise injustice (361e). The extreme example of the life of the just person suggests to the reader that the people who have influenced Glaucon have a very negative view of justice and see no benefit in acting justly apart from the rewards which it would bring. It also suggests that they do not consider justice to be an ingredient of a fulfilling life.²⁷ Admittedly, the example of the just life from Glaucon is an extreme one, but it is difficult to envisage a city where it would be so futile for the individual to act justly. The unhappy life of the just person as described by Glaucon is similar to the account given by Thrasymachus in *Republic* Book I where he describes the unhappy life of the just under the rule of the tyrant (344b-c). However, it is worth reflecting on the fact that the just man as outlined by Thrasymachus, continues to act justly, despite his suffering. It is not entirely clear from Thrasymachus' account whether the just remain just through fear of punishment in this life or the next one or for other reasons. Unlike the Glaucon's just man, Thrasymachus' just man would have a reputation for justice.

(Section 3)

The display oration by Adeimantus

Before Socrates is given a chance to digest what Glaucon has said concerning justice, Adeimantus makes a dramatic and unexpected entry into the discussion. The frequent change of respondent in Book I and Book II, part 1, gives the reader a sense of indecision and insecurity on the part of Plato, with no firm theory of justice emerging at this stage of the dialogue.²⁸ Adeimantus asserts 'You don't suppose that is a

²⁷ Norman (1983, p. 58) observes that in the argument advanced by Glaucon, we are encouraged to look to our interests first and see how justice can help us to achieve them. Whilst, in the argument put forward by Socrates in *Republic* Book II, 368a onwards, we need to identify what justice consists in first in order for us to appreciate what our true interests are.

²⁸ This situation changes from Book II, 368a onwards, where Glaucon and Adeimantus act as respondents enabling Socrates to advance substantial theories concerning justice and knowledge.

complete statement of the argument Socrates' and he then provides some further points to add to the account given by Glaucon (362d). Although he is clearly taken aback by this interruption from Adeimantus, Socrates is insistent that Adeimantus adds any points that Glaucon may have left out in his display oration. Socrates also indicates that he has become somewhat overwhelmed with the strong arguments being advanced by Glaucon in defence of injustice. He notes that Glaucon 'has said quite enough to floor me and make me quite incapable of coming to the rescue of justice' (362d). Although there is a significant amount of irony associated with Socrates' reaction at this point, the reader and audience are left with a sense of the pressure that the character Socrates is depicted as being under in *Republic* Book II, part 1. Also, the reader is made aware of the courage and resourcefulness that Socrates will need to demonstrate in the remaining books of the *Republic* in order to defend justice against the attacks from Glaucon and Adeimantus in Book II.

The input from Glaucon and Adeimantus in Book II is, to a certain extent, emotionally driven with each of these respondents determined to put forward their own challenge to Socrates. Their input at this stage of the dialogue appears to be in response to Socrates' harsh treatment of Thrasymachus in Book I. Some commentators have noted the importance of emotion in the elenchus exchange in *Republic* Book I and other dialogues.²⁹ This also appears to be a feature of the input from Glaucon and Adeimantus in *Republic* Book II, part 1, but to a lesser extent. There are further interruptions and responses from Glaucon and Adeimantus in the later Books of the *Republic* which also appear to be emotionally driven. These interruptions are considered in chapters 4 and 5 of this enquiry. In contrast to Thrasymachus in Book I and Glaucon and Adeimantus in Book II, part 1, the character Socrates remains remarkably calm throughout the *Republic* and demonstrates very little emotion.³⁰ However, in the *Republic*, Socrates frequently demonstrates uncertainty and a lack of confidence in his ability to find an answer to the question under consideration. The strongest of these examples is at the end of Book I, 354-b, where Socrates admits that he has not been able to identify the nature of justice.

²⁹ Blank 1993, pp. 435-436.

³⁰ It is a feature of a number of the early and middle dialogues of Plato that Socrates remains calm while some of the other characters in the dialogue display heightened emotion. Examples of this include, Calicles in the *Gorgias* and Laches and Nicias in the *Laches*.

Adeimantus provides the following arguments in order to build upon the points raised by Glaucon.

a) The arguments that people give in favour of justice

Adeimantus considers the common arguments that people give in favour of acting justly rather than unjustly and the reasons that they give for this course of action. He notes that fathers and others in authority encourage young men to be just for the good consequences that it will bring for them, which include a good reputation, good family connections and associated benefits. Here, justice is being recommended as a means to its ends rather than as a good in itself.³¹ Unlike Thrasymachus, in this example Adeimantus appears to be suggesting that there are some benefits to be gained from acting justly. He refers to passages from Hesiod and Homer where they give an account of the rewards that the just will receive from the gods in this life (363a-c).

Adeimantus also gives an account of the rewards that the poets have said that the just will gain in the other world where they will 'sit them down to a banquet of the Blest' (363c).³² He notes that it is also believed that the rewards given to the just in this life from the gods are extended to future generations of their families. In comparison with this, Adeimantus asserts that the life of the unjust man in this life and in the other world is one of misery and pain and is similar to the suffering of the just man as described by Glaucon above (363d). The reader is reminded by Adeimantus that this is not his account but one that is held by others who have been influenced by the poets when he notes that 'This is the sort of recommendation they produce for justice' (363d). Notably, Adeimantus' account is shot through with irony. The gods will accommodate those who have been conventionally just.

³¹ This fits into the third category of good advanced by Glaucon, that is, for its consequences.

³² In the Myth of Er, which is narrated by Socrates in Book X, part 2, 613e-621d, we are told that the just will be rewarded in the next life. An important difference between the account given by Adeimantus in Book II, part 1, and the Myth of Er is that in the myth the reality of people's conduct is at stake. Consideration is given to the Myth of Er in the next section of this chapter.

b) Wrong on the whole pays better than right. Justice is merely a convention.

Contrary to the view that he has put forward above in favour of justice, Adeimantus then gives an argument, which he claims can be backed up by evidence from the poets and ordinary conversation, in favour of injustice. Adeimantus notes that it is widely held that justice and self-control are good, but difficult to practice, requiring much effort and determination.³³ On the other hand, injustice is considered to be an easier path to follow and requires less effort on the part of the individual (363e-364a). He argues that self-indulgence and injustice are 'regarded as disgraceful only by convention; wrong on the whole pays better than right, they say' (364a). Adeimantus also claims that the unjust man can gain the respect of the majority of the people if he is wealthy and powerful, while the just man will gain no respect from the majority of the people if he is poor (364a-b). Importantly, Adeimantus points out that, from books written by Musaeus and Orpheus, people have come to believe that through sacrifices to the gods they can gain remission and absolution of sins for both the living and the dead (364e-365a). In his display oration Adeimantus alerts Socrates and the reader to the difficulty in persuading people to act justly when they hear so much spoken in favour of acting unjustly (365a-b). Also, people can see that they can gain the same rewards by acting unjustly while pretending to act justly.

It is interesting that Adeimantus is depicted advancing conflicting views of justice and injustice in such a convincing manner without questioning these views or seeking to establish a view of his own. The common views that he outlines concerning justice and injustice alert the reader and audience to the fact that the majority of the people appear to be sceptical about the benefits of acting justly and they believe that injustice pays. Although, Adeimantus and Glaucon claim to be putting forward the common view of justice which is inspired by people such as Thrasymachus, the view advanced by them is not identical to that provided by Thrasymachus in Book I. Thrasymachus asserted that justice is the interest of the stronger party, that is, somebody else and not the subject who takes the just action. According to Adeimantus' and Glaucon's line of argument, acting justly is not really in the agent's interest, in the sense that it would be more in their interest to act unjustly if they could get away with it.

³³ It is worth noting that the praise people give of justice is of a cynical nature as it concerns the 'artificial consequences', that is, the rewards associated with just acts rather than justice itself.

c) Appearance has more force than reality. The unjust person must operate in such a way as to appear to be just. The unjust person should sin first and sacrifice later.

Having put forward the points in favour of acting justly and unjustly, Adeimantus asserts that the majority of the people would conclude from this that they have more to gain from acting unjustly but appearing to be just. They would also conclude that this is a skill which the individual would need to develop. Adeimantus notes that the unjust person would need to 'put up a facade that gives the illusory appearance of virtue' and at the same time be careful not to be found out. He suggests that the unjust man could learn the art of persuasion and the other skills that he requires from professional teachers of these arts (365c-d). It would seem to the reader that this is a very contrived and deceitful way of operating for the unjust individual.

Adeimantus reiterates the point that it is widely believed by the people that those who act unjustly can gain forgiveness from the gods by making sacrifices and giving offerings. This gives the unjust individual the confidence to act unjustly in this life if he can get away with it and not to worry about being punished in the next life.

Adeimantus concludes that, given these arguments in favour of injustice, it will be very difficult to persuade people to act justly. This passage reminds the reader of the interchange between Socrates and Cephalus in *Republic* Book I, 331b, where Cephalus observes that his wealth would enable him to pay off any debts that he owes and avoid leaving any sacrifices to the Gods unmade before he dies.³⁴ In the Myth of Er, which is narrated by Socrates in *Republic* Book X, we are told that the gods cannot be paid off or be deceived and that the unjust would be punished in the afterlife.³⁵ Importantly, in the ideal state as advanced by Socrates in *Republic* Book IV, justice is not connected to money, with the guardians or rulers having no personal wealth.

³⁴ This is not to suggest that the character Cephalus was unjust, but it highlights his reliance on money for virtue. In chapter 1 of this study, consideration is given to the exchange between Socrates and Cephalus in *Republic* Book I.

³⁵ In *Republic* Books II and III Socrates gives detailed consideration to the portrayal of the gods in poetry and he argues that the majority of poetry should not be permitted in the ideal state. According to Socrates, this is because it misrepresents the gods who are perfectly good and should only be portrayed in this manner.

d) Adeimantus' challenge to Socrates

Adeimantus concludes his display oration by setting a challenge to Socrates on behalf of Glaucon and himself. He observes that Socrates has claimed that justice and right should be placed within the category of good that is good for its own sake and for its consequences. He asks Socrates 'Let us therefore hear you commending justice for the real benefits it brings its possessor, compared with the damage injustice does him.' 'Prove to us therefore, not only that justice is superior to injustice, but that, irrespective of whether gods or men know it or not, one is good and the other evil because of its inherent effects on its possessor' (367d-e). In order to defend justice against the theories put forward by Glaucon and Adeimantus, Socrates will need to provide a sophisticated theory of justice which will ensure that the person who acts unjustly does not gain the rewards associated with acting justly.³⁶

In their input in Book II, Glaucon and Adeimantus differ in the examples that they give and the aspects of justice and injustice which they focus their attention on. But, the core message from them is basically the same. Both of them demonstrate that it is widely held among members of the community that justice is only beneficial for its consequences. If people could get away with being unjust they would do so. It is interesting therefore to consider why Plato chose to include two main respondents with such similar views concerning justice, and without expressing a view of their own, in *Republic* Book II onwards, rather than just one respondent. One possibility is the fact that Glaucon and Adeimantus both speak up in favour of injustice in Book II, part 1, gives a stronger case for Socrates to answer. It also depicts the respondents as putting forward a united front against Socrates, unlike in Book I where Polemarchus and Thrasymachus provided different theories of justice. The accounts from Glaucon and Adeimantus also help the reader and audience in the background to come to terms with the complexity of the issues under consideration.

Importantly, the reader of the dialogue cannot be sure of what Plato's precise view was concerning justice. Nevertheless, both Glaucon and Adeimantus indicate that they are not convinced by the theories of justice that they are putting forward in Book

³⁶ Shields (2006, pp. 80-82) asserts that in Book II, part I, when Glaucon and Adeimantus challenge Socrates to give a defence of justice they are also asking Socrates to provide an analysis of justice. Shields argues, and I agree, that at this point in the dialogue, Plato also appears to be challenging himself and the reader to provide a detailed analysis of justice.

II. It is interesting that Glaucon and Adeimantus do not say why they are not convinced of the theories that they are advancing. This appears to be a weakness in Plato's structure in the *Republic* as the arguments they give seem strong and convincing to the reader.

The display oration from Glaucon and Adeimantus in early Book II creates a distance between Book I and Book II, part 2, 368a onwards, and it gives the character Socrates a chance to recover his confidence from the negative outcome of the encounter with Thrasymachus in Book I. It also enables Socrates to take the lead again in the enquiry from Book II, 368a onwards, once Glaucon and Adeimantus have set their challenge to him.³⁷ It enables Plato to develop further the points raised by the respondents in Book I concerning justice. This approach proceeds throughout the remaining Books of the dialogue where the theories raised in Books I and II are developed by Socrates.³⁸ This approach helps the reader and audience to move their understanding forward concerning justice. The fact that Plato puts so much effort in early Book II into finding a way to proceed with the enquiry into justice suggests that he considers this to be an important issue and he is determined to move the enquiry forward in a new direction.

From Book II, part 2, 368a onwards, when Socrates launches into the dialectic enquiry, it would have been difficult for one main respondent to keep up with the theories outlined by Socrates in the enquiry and also to speak up critically where necessary. The dialectic enquiry from *Republic*, 368a onwards, is considered in chapters 3, 4, and 5 of this study and it will be shown that Glaucon and Adeimantus continue to play an important role in the remaining Books of the dialogue.

³⁷ Rutherford (1995, p. 210) asserts that in Book II Glaucon and Adeimantus act as participants rather than admiring listeners. I would go further than this and suggest that although Glaucon and Adeimantus do not provide a theory of their own, they take the lead in the discussion in Book II, part 1, with Socrates listening attentively to them.

³⁸ Blondell (2002, p. 111) observes that the fact that Plato does not feature in any of his dialogues suggests that it would be wrong to interpret him as adopting a developmentalist approach in his writings, as we cannot be sure that he endorses any of the theories that are put forward. But, how then do we account for the new philosophical theories that emerge in the dialogues? Although the reader cannot be sure that Plato supports these theories, there are clear signs of philosophical development in the *Republic* and within the group of early and middle dialogues. Kraut (2002, pp. 1-8) provides a useful critique of Blondell's position concerning developmentalism. This issue is considered in the introductory chapter of this study.

(Section 4)

Wider issues relating to *Republic* Book II, part 1, and in particular its relation to Book I and Book X, part 2

Through the characters of Socrates and the respondents, Plato adopts the elenchus and display oration methods of enquiry before the dialectic method. This suggests that there was some uncertainty as to which method of enquiry to adopt in the *Republic*. It also gives the reader an appreciation of the difficulty that Plato may have experienced in identifying the method of enquiry that would enable him to determine the nature of justice. This is in contrast with the character Socrates as depicted in the early dialogues who relies upon one method of enquiry, the elenchus method.

Surprisingly, the display oration method is only featured in Book II of the *Republic* and it does not appear in any of the other Books of this dialogue. However, it resembles the style of the speech given by the sophist Protagoras, as depicted by Plato in the *Protagoras* (320c-328d), which is monologue in style with Socrates remaining silent. The change to the display oration method in *Republic* Book II alerts the reader to the limits of the elenchus method as depicted in Book I.³⁹ After Book I, Plato seems to have abandoned the elenchus method for now as it has not enabled Socrates and the respondents to move any further forward in their enquiry into the nature of justice.⁴⁰ Like the elenchus method, the display oration method in Book II brings out strongly the contradictory opinions that people hold concerning justice and injustice. Nevertheless, like the elenchus method of enquiry, it does not enable Socrates and the respondents to find out the nature of justice and as such is foredoomed to failure: the method reflects the arguments (however successful they appear to be at the time).

³⁹ Guthrie (1975, p. 443) observes that the arguments from Socrates in *Republic* Book I are not calculated to convert Thrasymachus. However, the outcome of the elenchus exchange between Socrates and Thrasymachus in Book I motivates Glaucon and Adeimantus into speaking up in Book II, part 1.

⁴⁰ It is worth noting that at this point Plato did not abandon the elenchus method for good. He adopted the elenchus method again in the *Theaetetus*, which is generally considered to be a later work than the *Republic*.

a) Similarities between Book I and Book II, part 1

There are a number of common features between *Republic* Book I and Book II, part 1. They are both highly dramatic in style with the respondents playing a key role in the discussion.⁴¹ The character of the respondents is strongly brought to light, especially in the case of Thrasymachus, Glaucon and Adeimantus. There appear to be connections between the depiction of the character of the respondents and the philosophical theories that they provide. Thrasymachus is depicted as an impatient and uncooperative character and this corresponds with the negative view of justice that he advances as a means for the stronger party to take advantage of the weaker party. Glaucon and Adeimantus are depicted as more patient. Notably, they do not interrupt each other in Book II and they do not interrupt the other respondents in Book I. This enables them to advance more thought through and complex arguments concerning the nature of justice than Thrasymachus, who was more impetuous.

In Books I and II, the respondents boldly and confidently advance theories concerning justice to Socrates, especially Thrasymachus, Glaucon and Adeimantus. These three respondents come across more convincingly than Cephalus and Polemarchus because of the strength of their arguments and the theories that they put forward, along with their characterisation which is more clearly defined. In Book II, Glaucon and Adeimantus challenge Socrates to give his own view of justice. This can be seen as a response to the complaint made by Thrasymachus in Book I that Socrates would not give an account of his own.⁴² In *Republic* Book I and Book II, part 1, (and other dialogues of Plato), the dialogue appears to be framed in such a way as to make the readers feel that they are partaking in the enquiry and to look to themselves for an answer to the question being considered.⁴³

In *Republic* Book II, part 1, justice is portrayed by Glaucon and Adeimantus as a relative notion which is dependent on the particular situation. Whether an act is considered just or unjust would depend on the view of justice which was generally accepted by the community at the time in question. This notion of justice can be contrasted with the Forms as described by Socrates in the *Republic* Books V, VI,

⁴¹ For the purpose of this example I am including Glaucon and Adeimantus as respondents, despite the fact that Socrates plays more of the role of the respondent in *Republic* Book II, part 1.

⁴² Blondell 2002, p. 191.

⁴³ This point is noted by Von Reden and Goldhill (1999 pp. 265-266).

and VII, which are eternal and changeless and the theory of the just city and individual as outlined in Book IV. Thrasymachus has also provided a relative notion of justice in *Republic* Book I, but one that is more radical than the theory put forward by Glaucon and Adeimantus because it does not allow for any compromise within the community, for example, by forming agreements and laws concerning action. This alerts the reader to the fact that the theory of justice that Socrates later outlines in *Republic* Book IV is far removed from the selfish notions of justice given by Thrasymachus, Glaucon and Adeimantus in Books I and II.

b) Differences between *Republic* Book I and Book II, part 1

There are many interesting differences between *Republic* Book I and Book II, part 1. In Book II, part 1, Glaucon and Adeimantus are both assertive but not rude to Socrates. Their lack of aggression towards Socrates results in the reader sympathising with them and taking the arguments that they advance seriously. The silence of Socrates and the other respondents during this part of the enquiry, in comparison with Book I, supports this view. In Book II Glaucon and Adeimantus are not competing against each other or Socrates. Instead, they are alerting Socrates to the extreme case for injustice, in order to persuade Socrates to provide a positive theory in defence of justice. Also, the input from Glaucon and Adeimantus in Book II gives a sense of urgency to this task.

This can be compared with the reaction of the reader to the interruption by Thrasymachus in Book I. The rudeness and impatience displayed by Thrasymachus in Book I and the reaction of Socrates to this is intended to put the readers on their guard against Thrasymachus. It also appears to be designed to make the reader wary of the theories concerning justice that Thrasymachus advances.⁴⁴ As they enter into the dialectic exchange in Book II, part 2, Glaucon, Adeimantus and Socrates are all in agreement on what it is they are enquiring into and how they are going to proceed with the enquiry (368a). In Book II, part 1, Glaucon and Adeimantus give a challenge to Socrates that is as intellectually challenging as the one outlined by Thrasymachus in Book I. But they do not display any of the hostility and

⁴⁴ In chapter 1 of this study, consideration is given to the strength of the arguments advanced by Thrasymachus in *Republic* Book I and the ongoing presence of Thrasymachus in the dialogue as a whole.

competitiveness of Thrasymachus which had such a negative impact on the enquiry.⁴⁵ Also, Thrasymachus displayed a lack of systematic exposition as opposed to Glaucon and Adeimantus.

The positive end of Book II, part 1, can be compared with the *aporia* (deadlock) and sense of dissatisfaction experienced by Socrates and the respondents, Polemarchus and Thrasymachus, at the end of Book I and the lack of an obvious way forward for them to proceed with the enquiry. From *Republic* Book II onwards, the roles played by Glaucon, Adeimantus and Socrates in the dialogue appear to prefigure the philosophical role of the guardians in the ideal state, as outlined in Book IV, who will seek to gain knowledge of the Forms. In my view, in the dialectic enquiry from 368a onwards, Socrates represents the guardians and Glaucon and Adeimantus represent the junior guardians in the ideal state. Indeed, the fact that the other respondents remain almost silent from Book II onwards, suggests that they do not have the right disposition for philosophical enquiry in the dialogue or perhaps in the ideal state.⁴⁶ This appears to prefigure the notion of specialisation of labour in the ideal state, as outlined in *Republic* Book IV, where the guardians are the only members of society who would be given the opportunity to embark on philosophical study and seek to gain knowledge of justice and the other Forms.

The reader can appreciate the importance of the role that Glaucon and Adeimantus play in Book II, part 1, in enabling Socrates to progress with the enquiry into justice, despite the inconclusive end of Book I. It enables Socrates to proceed with the enquiry in Book II, part 2, without having to confront Thrasymachus directly. Nevertheless, the comment from Socrates at the beginning of Book II, part 2, where he displays a lack of confidence in his ability to provide an answer to the challenge from Glaucon and Adeimantus, alerts the reader to the struggle ahead facing the character Socrates and the respondents in their dialectic enquiry into justice.⁴⁷ Socrates notes that 'I don't see how I'm to help you; I don't think I've got the ability - witness my failure to convince you just now, when I thought I had demonstrated the superiority

⁴⁵ Blondell 2002, p. 199.

⁴⁶ Beversluis (2000, p. 381) asserts that Glaucon and Adeimantus have a good nature which makes them inclined to be just, despite what Thrasymachus and others have preached to them. This makes them more suitable as respondents in the *Republic* than Thrasymachus.

⁴⁷ Although it can be appreciated that there is some irony associated with these negative comments from Socrates, the theme of uncertainty is one that also features in Books III to IX of the *Republic* and it reduces the reader's confidence in the theories being advanced by Socrates in the *Republic*.

of justice in my discussion with Thrasymachus' (368b). This gives the reader a sense of the struggle that Plato faced in moving from the elenchus method to the dialectic method of enquiry. The dialectic method of enquiry requires a much greater level of input from the person leading the enquiry, that is, the character Socrates in the *Republic*. Importantly, it requires Plato as the author of the dialogue to put forward positive theories, which he may or may not support, concerning the nature of justice. This is the most significant development in the *Republic* from Book II, 368a onwards.

It is notable that Socrates plays a different role in *Republic* Book II, part 1, than he does in the rest of the dialogue. In Book II, part 1, Socrates is depicted listening to Glaucon and Adeimantus rather than asking them questions and he remains silent for long periods of time. This can be compared with Book I where Socrates conducts elenchus enquiries with three respondents: Cephalus, Polemarchus and Thrasymachus, taking the lead and asking the questions. It can also be compared with Book II, 368a onwards, where Socrates leads the dialectical enquiry into justice with Glaucon and Adeimantus acting as respondents. There is a change in approach in Book II, part 1, with Glaucon and Adeimantus providing a comparative thesis of justice in order to establish whether the just or unjust life leads to happiness for the individual. This is unlike Socrates in Book II, part 2 onwards, who sets out to establish the just state and soul. Glaucon and Adeimantus enquire into the nature of justice from a different angle than Thrasymachus. Glaucon breaks new ground by introducing three different categories of reasons for acting justly: for its own sake; for its own sake and its consequences; and for its consequences. However, Glaucon and Adeimantus appear to comply with Thrasymachus' core view that the unjust life seems to be preferable to the just life.⁴⁸

It is worth considering Plato's intention in his depiction of Socrates in Book II, part 1. It seems that in order to find the appropriate method of enquiry for the remainder of the work, a change of approach is required in Book II, part 1. Here the character Socrates gives Glaucon and Adeimantus a chance to outline their position more clearly and thoroughly than Thrasymachus and Polemarchus in Book I. However, it is notable that Socrates does not give his agreement to any of the arguments put forward by Glaucon and Adeimantus in Book II, part 1. This is unlike the role of the respondents in the other books of the *Republic* who are asked to give their agreement to Socrates

⁴⁸ Irwin (1995, p. 189).

as the enquiry proceeds, including the elenchus in Book I and the dialectic method in Book II, 368a onwards. The only point that Socrates agrees with in Book II, part 1, is to take up the challenge from Glaucon and Adeimantus and to defend justice against the attacks from them.

c) Connections between Book II, part 1 and the Myth of Er in Book X⁴⁹

There appear to be some connections between the display oration given by Glaucon and Adeimantus in *Republic* Book II, part 1, 357a-367e, and the Myth of Er, which is the story of Er's encounter with the other world, or world after death, as narrated by Socrates in Book X, part 2, 613e-621d.⁵⁰ Both the display oration method in Book II and the method of presentation adopted by Socrates in Book X, part 2, are monologue in style with the respondent/s remaining mainly silent.⁵¹ In Book II, part 1, Glaucon and Adeimantus are not advancing their own view but the view of another. The same applies to Socrates in Book X, part 2. Also, in these parts of the *Republic*, the lead speaker does not gain the approval of the respondent and indeed the agreement of the respondent is not sought. This is different from the elenchus and dialectic methods where the approval of the respondent is sought on a regular basis and it is required in order for the enquiry to move forward.

In Book II, part 1, Socrates encourages Glaucon and Adeimantus to put forward the view of justice that is widely held among the community. He says to Glaucon 'Nothing could please me better,' 'for it's a subject which all sensible men should be glad to discuss' (358e). When Adeimantus enters into the discussion in Book II, Socrates welcomes his input and says 'if your brother has left anything out, lend him a hand' (362d). When Socrates offers to narrate the Myth of Er in Book X, Glaucon remarks encouragingly 'There are few things I would hear more gladly' (614b). This can be contrasted with *Republic* Book I where Thrasymachus bursts into the discussion without being invited to speak and Socrates' initial reaction of alarm and dismay at the interruption (336b-e).

⁴⁹ Halliwell (2007, pp. 445-473) provides a useful study of the Myth of Er. See also Annas (1982, pp. 119-143) who considers the myths at the end of the *Gorgias*, *Phaedo* and *Republic*.

⁵⁰ Kahn (1993, pp. 140-141) alerts the reader to some interesting images that appear in Book II, part 2, which prefigure the later Books of the *Republic*. I would add this example from Book II, part 1, to his account.

⁵¹ For the purpose of this example, I am taking the respondent in Book II, part 1, to be Socrates because of the dominant role that Glaucon and Adeimantus play in the enquiry in this part of the *Republic*. In Book X, part 2, Glaucon and Adeimantus act as the respondents.

In both *Republic* Book II, part 1, and Book X, part 2, incredible stories are told: the story of Gyges' ring and the story of what happens to the souls of the dead in the other world.⁵² In both cases the stories are given to back up the arguments that have been put forward and they bring the enquiry to a different level of understanding.⁵³ The story of Gyges' ring supports the account of justice advanced by Glaucon in Book II and the story of the other world backs up the account of justice given by Socrates from Book II, 368a onwards in the *Republic*. In the display oration from Glaucon and Adeimantus and the Myth of Er from Socrates, we are given an account of the extreme positions of the just and unjust man and how they fare. Notably, according to the Myth of Er, the just souls are rewarded in the other world, whilst the unjust souls are not. From a theological point of view, the Myth of Er contradicts Glaucon and Adeimantus in Book II. In Book II the afterlife is depicted as something which unjust people can enjoy if they have made the right sacrifices. In the Myth of Er, the unjust are punished.

The Myth of Er related by Socrates in Book X is designed to give additional weight to the theory of justice advanced by Socrates from Book II, part 2, 368a onwards.⁵⁴ Through the Myth of Er, Socrates gives a speculative account of the rewards and punishments that the agent will receive in the next life rather than providing any additional theories concerning justice. When embarking on the Myth of Er, Socrates notes that so far in the enquiry he has given the rewards and punishments in this life but that they are nothing in comparison with those of the next life (613e-614a, Book X). Socrates then gives an outline of the punishments that will be given in the next life for wrong doing in this life and the rewards that will be given to the good (615a-b).

Contrary to the assertion of Glaucon and Adeimantus in Book II, part 1, Socrates seeks to demonstrate through the Myth of Er that those who get away with wrong

⁵² Gill (1993, p. 86) asserts that Plato's use of myth is designed to characterise a form of knowledge that is beyond the reach of the characters depicted in the dialogue.

⁵³ Rutherford (1995, p. 210) notes this in relation to the Myth in Book X. I would suggest that it also applies to the story of Gyges' ring in Book II.

⁵⁴ Laird (2001, pp. 23-24) alerts the reader to some connections between the story of Gyges' ring and the Myth of Er. Unlike Laird, I would suggest that the myth in Book X is introduced to back up the arguments already given by Socrates concerning justice rather than to provide an ultimate answer to Glaucon and Adeimantus. This is because in the arguments advanced by him in Book II, part 2 to Book X, part 1, Socrates has attempted to demonstrate sufficiently that justice pays for the individual and society as a whole. Hollander (1983, pp. 211-213) also considers some interesting connections between the story of Gyges' ring and the Myth of Er.

doing in this life will be punished in the next life. This will apply in particular to the tyrant who will be severely punished in the next life. We are given the example of Ardiaeus the tyrant who has been 'bound hand and foot and neck, flung down and flayed, and then impaled on thorns by the roadside' to be flung later into Tartarus (615c-616a). This is the punishment given to all tyrants as they are deemed to have incurable souls. Notably, the character Socrates uses the Myth of Er, to contradict another myth, the story of Gyges' ring as given by Glaucon. Importantly, according to the Myth of Er, Gyges may get away with his crimes in this life, but not in the next one.⁵⁵

In the examples of the display oration method in Book II and the Myth of Er in Book X, Plato is using a similar method of presentation for different purposes. In Book II, it is used to provoke Socrates into giving his defence of justice. In Book X, it is used in an attempt to demonstrate conclusively that injustice never pays. Glaucon and Adeimantus admit that they are not advancing their own view. Although they find the view, which has been inspired by Thrasymachus and others, persuasive they still hope that through the enquiry with Socrates they will be able to prove that justice is valuable in its own right. Similarly, in the Myth of Er, Socrates relates a myth rather than a view of his own. But, he appears to be convinced by the Myth of Er. This becomes clear at the end of Book X where he suggests that if they are guided by the Myth of Er and believe that the soul is immortal, they will pursue justice and wisdom and be at peace with the gods in this life and the next one (621c). The links between *Republic* Book II, part 1 and Book X, part 2, as outlined above, highlight the importance of Book II in the work as a whole and in particular the connections between it and the rest of the dialogue.

Myths are included in other dialogues of Plato.⁵⁶ As in the case of the *Republic*, these are used to provide further backing to the theories advanced by Socrates in the dialogues. Like the *Republic*, the *Gorgias* ends with Socrates narrating a myth, the Myth of the Judgement of Souls (523a-527a). This myth in the *Gorgias* is designed to provide further backing to the thesis outlined by Socrates in that dialogue that

⁵⁵ Annas (1981, pp. 69-70) observes that in order to demonstrate that it pays for Gyges to act justly, even though he can get away with acting unjustly, Plato will need to provide a theory of justice that goes beyond the common-sense intuitions about justice. Annas asserts that the account given by Socrates in the *Republic*, will apply to 'extreme hypothetical cases as well as what actually happens in the real world.'

⁵⁶ Partenie (2004) provides a useful commentary on a selection of Plato's myths.

justice is the route to happiness. As in the *Republic*, the myth in the *Gorgias* is related by Socrates after the enquiry with the respondents has come to an end and they are not given the opportunity to provide a response to the myth. It is notable that in the *Gorgias* the elenchus enquiry has reached *aporia* or deadlock prior to the myth with the respondent Callicles displaying anger and a complete lack of co-operation, whilst the dialectic enquiry in the *Republic* has ended amicably prior to the myth. In both myths the just are rewarded and the unjust are punished in the next life.

In addition to narrating the Myth of Er at the end of the *Republic*, Plato includes other images in this dialogue. These include the simile of the sun, the image of the line and the allegory of the cave, which are given by Socrates in Books VI and VII.⁵⁷ These provide the reader with a graphic illustration of the level of knowledge which the guardians would possess as opposed to the workers and auxiliaries in the ideal state. This prepares the reader for the discussion of stage two of the education of the guardians in Book VII, 521c-541a, and especially dialectic as outlined from 531d-534e. As in the case of the Myth of Er, these illustrations are provided by Socrates in order to give further backing to the theories that he is putting forward in the dialectic enquiry.

The use of myth and illustration in the *Republic* can make it difficult for the reader to distinguish between fact and fiction with regard to the theories being advanced by Socrates who uses this to his advantage at some points in the dialogue. An example of this is the simile of the sun. It is important to note that although this is introduced as a simile and Socrates admits that he cannot provide a description of the Form of the Good itself, he assumes the existence of the Form of the Good in the remainder of the dialogue. Similarly, in the Myth of Er, it is assumed by Socrates that there is an afterlife and that the just will be rewarded and the unjust punished in the afterlife.

It is worth observing that in Book X, part 2, the silence of Glaucon and Adeimantus appears to be designed to suggest that they are in agreement with Socrates. However, as they have not been given the opportunity in the *Republic* to respond to the Myth of Er, we cannot be sure of what their reaction would have been. Halliwell (2007, pp. 471-472) questions whether Glaucon, to whom Socrates addresses the

⁵⁷ The significance of the illustrations of the Sun, Line and Cave is considered in chapter 5 of this study.

Myth of Er, has been persuaded by the myth. With regard to the Myth of Er, Halliwell observes (p. 472), and I agree, that 'Despite the almost vatic tone in which Socrates anticipates the soul's eternal well-being, the work's denial of a final reaction to Glaucon functions as a signal of its own philosophically incomplete status.' Annas (1982, p. 133) alerts the reader to a problem associated with the reincarnation of souls as outlined in the Myth of Er. She asserts that 'the more my life is shown to me as being part of an unending cycle of events over which I have no control, the less I can feel that rewards for being just, or punishments for being unjust, really answer to what I have done and chosen.' In my view, it is likely that Glaucon and Adeimantus would have wanted to raise questions with Socrates about this and other points concerning the Myth of Er.

Importantly, the silence of Glaucon and Adeimantus at this point in the enquiry makes the reader want to act as respondent and raise some questions concerning the myth, which goes beyond what Socrates has attempted to establish in the dialectic enquiry. There are other points in the dialectic enquiry in the *Republic* where Glaucon and Adeimantus remain silent when the reader would expect them to raise questions concerning the theories being advanced by Socrates and these are considered in the remaining chapters of this study.

Conclusion

The input from Glaucon and Adeimantus in Book II, part 1, together with the input from the respondents in Book I, especially from Thrasymachus, suggests that when Plato started working on the *Republic*, there was some indecisiveness on his part as to which method of enquiry to adopt. This gives the reader an appreciation of the struggle that Plato may have faced in formulating the theories that feature in the *Republic*. Also, the reader can appreciate the originality of the theories included in the *Republic*, 368a onwards, as outlined by Socrates. The theory of justice that Socrates outlines in Book IV of the *Republic* is controversial and radically different from the theories provided by the respondents in Books I and II. This suggests that one of Plato's aims in writing the *Republic*, was to encourage the readers of the dialogue to try to reach their own understanding of justice rather than being led by the views held by the majority of the people.

Chapter 3

The dialectic method of enquiry: Socrates' response to Glaucon and Adeimantus

Introduction

In *Republic* Book II, part 2, from 368a onwards the reader and audience in the background are introduced to a new method of enquiry: the dialectic method. This method is introduced by Socrates and it is the method that he adopts in the remaining Books of the *Republic*.¹ The change of approach has been prompted by the dramatic end to *Republic* Book II, part 1, 367d-e, where Adeimantus challenges Socrates to provide a theory of justice.

In section 1, this chapter considers Socrates' initial response to Glaucon and Adeimantus in Book II, 368a to 376c, and their reaction to his response. In section 2, detailed consideration is given to *Republic* Book IV, 427d-445e, where through the dialectic method of enquiry, Socrates and the respondents put forward an account of the just state and just soul. Section 3 looks at some wider issues concerning *Republic* Book II, part 2 and Book IV and especially how they relate to the earlier and later Books of the dialogue. In particular, it looks forward to the significance of the doubt expressed by Glaucon and Socrates at the end of Book IX, 592a-b, concerning the possibility of the ideal state.

(Section 1)

Socrates' Initial response to Glaucon and Adeimantus

This section focuses on Book II, part 2, 368a-376c, where Socrates makes his initial response and on the response to this from Glaucon and Adeimantus. Socrates' initial reaction to the challenge from Adeimantus to provide a theory of his own concerning justice is interesting and surprising. The reader would have expected Socrates to have difficulty in formulating a response at this stage of the *Republic*, after the robust challenges put to him by the respondents in Book I and Book II, part 1. Despite the

¹ With the exception of *Republic* Book X, part 2, 613e-621d, where Socrates gives the account of the Myth of Er.

strength of the arguments given by Glaucon and Adeimantus in Book II, part 1, and the forceful nature of the challenge from Adeimantus at 367d-e, Socrates claims to be 'absolutely delighted by what they had said' (368a). He then praises Glaucon and Adeimantus for their ability to put forward the case for injustice so strongly and yet hold onto the belief that justice is better than injustice (368a).² This comment from Socrates is important because the new method of enquiry that he adopts at this stage of the *Republic* requires the help of respondents who share the same basic conviction concerning justice as Socrates, that it is better than injustice.³ This can be compared with the elenchus exchange with Thrasymachus in *Republic* Book I where Socrates and the respondent did not share this understanding. Thrasymachus, in particular, would not be a suitable respondent in the dialectical enquiry, from Book II, 368a onwards, due to the inflexible nature of his convictions concerning justice and injustice.⁴

Notably, Socrates expresses uncertainty about his ability to rise to the challenge from the respondents and he seeks their support. Socrates claims 'I don't see how I'm to help you; I don't think I've got the ability - witness my failure to convince you just now, when I thought I had demonstrated the superiority of justice in my discussion with Thrasymachus' (368b). Nevertheless, he agrees to take on the challenge in order to come to the rescue of justice. It is difficult to interpret how sincere the character Socrates is being portrayed at this point of the enquiry. Plato may be expressing his own uncertainty here through the character Socrates. Perhaps it is a warning to the reader and audience that the enquiry into justice will be difficult and that it may lead to some controversial conclusions. The courage displayed by Socrates at this point shows him in a strong light. This encourages the reader to sympathise with him and to listen to what he has to say.

Socrates is encouraged by Glaucon and the others present who we are told begged him 'to come to the rescue and not let the argument drop, but to try to find out what justice and injustice are and what their real advantages' are (368c). This makes a

² Socrates suggests that Glaucon and Adeimantus 'must indeed have something divine' about them (368a).

³ Blondell (2002, p. 205) notes that Glaucon and Adeimantus both admire Socrates and share his interests and convictions.

⁴ Importantly, at 348e, Socrates realises that they have no basic assumption in common with regard to their understanding of justice. Thrasymachus ranks injustice with wisdom and excellence whereas Socrates ranks these attributes with justice.

connection with Books I and II and reminds the reader that the respondents and wider audience are still present and following the discussion. The level of support that Socrates gains at this point in the dialogue can be compared with Cephalus, Polemarchus, Thrasymachus, Glaucon and Adeimantus who did not receive such support from the wider audience present in the dialogue. It can be compared especially with Thrasymachus, who made such a rude entry into the enquiry in Book I, 336b-d, without being invited to do so and despite the attempt made to prevent him by those sitting near him (336b). However, the fact that Socrates is only given the chance to put forward the theory of justice in Book IV, after the theories given by Polemarchus, Thrasymachus, Glaucon and Adeimantus, gives the reader an appreciation of the level of opposition that Plato may experience to the theory of justice as outlined in the dialectic enquiry in the *Republic*.

Surprisingly, despite their eagerness for Socrates to give his theory concerning justice at this stage of the enquiry, the wider audience remains mainly silent for the remainder of the work, with Glaucon and Adeimantus acting as respondents. Indeed, Thrasymachus, Polemarchus, and the wider audience appear to be somewhat silenced by the dialectic method of enquiry. But, the occasional input from Thrasymachus and Polemarchus in the remainder of the dialogue reminds the reader that they are still present.⁵ However, their silence during most of the dialectic enquiry appears to be designed to suggest that they are in agreement with Socrates. This encourages the reader to take seriously the theories outlined by Socrates.

The dialectic method of enquiry involves question and answer and in this respect it is similar, in surface form, to the elenchus as adopted by Socrates in Book I.⁶ However, in the dialectic method Socrates appears to be more in control of the discussion with the respondents following his lead. This enables Socrates to advance positive theories concerning justice and knowledge.⁷ This can be contrasted with the elenchus

⁵ Polemarchus makes an entry into the discussion at 449b-d where he urges Adeimantus to ask Socrates to provide further details concerning the arrangements for women and the family in the ideal city. Nails (2002, p. 289) gives details of the entries made by Thrasymachus into the discussion after Book I. The input from Polemarchus and Thrasymachus in Book I and the role of Thrasymachus within the *Republic* as a whole is considered in detail in chapter 1 of this study.

⁶ For a discussion of the dialectic method in the *Republic*, see (Kahn 1999, pp. 294-296).

⁷ Socrates gives an outline of the dialectic method in *Republic* Book VII, 531d-534e. But, it is important to note that the dialectic enquiry in the *Republic* has not yet reached this level of perfection. Socrates and the respondents appear to be portrayed as less experienced than the guardians at this method. Also, in the dialectic enquiry in the *Republic*, Socrates and the respondents Glaucon and Adeimantus do not gain knowledge of the Forms.

in Book I, where Thrasymachus provides a number of theories concerning justice and Socrates questions him, but with the enquiry ending inconclusively. In the dialectic method, Glaucon and Adeimantus assist Socrates in the enquiry and speak up when they require clarification or disagree with what Socrates is saying.⁸ The dialectic also differs from the display oration method which is adopted by Glaucon and Adeimantus in Book II, part 1, where they take the lead in the discussion putting forward theories concerning justice, with Socrates remaining mainly silent.

Hare provides a useful distinction between the elenchus and dialectic methods as adopted by Plato. According to Hare, the elenchus method is developed further by Plato into the dialectic method. 'The development is chiefly in the method proposed for setting out in a systematic form the definitions which were the answers to Socrates' questions' in the earlier method. In the dialectic method, 'in order to say what something is, one has first to give its genus, assigning it into the class of things' which it belongs.⁹ An example of this is the enquiry into the just state and just soul in *Republic* Book IV.

It is notable that Socrates quickly gains confidence in Book II, part 2 as he commences with the dialectic enquiry. This may be as a result of the support that he received from the respondents and wider audience. Alternatively, it may be driven by his determination to come to the rescue of justice. Socrates notes the obscure nature of the enquiry that they are about to embark upon and he suggests that they start their enquiry with the bigger picture first, that is, the community and then consider the smaller picture, that is, the individual (368c-369b). He receives approval from Adeimantus who is responding on behalf of Glaucon and himself. Adeimantus replies 'We know what we are in for, go on' (369b). Socrates' reason for choosing to look at the bigger picture first is that he claims that they are not very clever (368d). Although Socrates is still uncertain at this stage of the enquiry, he has clearly gained some confidence since the end of Book I where he admitted that he still did not know what justice consists in (354b) as he did not have any knowledge concerning justice. Socrates proceeds with the dialectic enquiry by considering the basic needs of a community and how these might be acquired.

⁸ As noted in the typology of key respondents in the introductory chapter of this study, in the dialectic enquiry with Socrates in *Republic*, 368a onwards, Glaucon and Adeimantus act as capable, sympathetic and occasionally challenging respondents and at some points of the dialogue they remain silent for extended periods.

⁹ Hare 1996, pp. 41-44.

During the course of Book II, part 2, Socrates' confidence continues to increase gradually as he takes the lead in the enquiry with the respondents. While Socrates begins to take on more of the role of a tutor, the chief respondents Glaucon and Adeimantus become quieter and they demonstrate willingness to engage with Socrates in a shared enquiry at this point in the dialogue.¹⁰ This is the opposite to what happened in Book II, part 1, where Glaucon and Adeimantus took the lead in the enquiry with Socrates playing more of the role of the respondent. But, importantly in Book II, part 1, Socrates did not give his agreement to the theories put forward by Glaucon and Adeimantus. This, along with the fact that Glaucon and Adeimantus were acting as devil's advocates, suggests that Plato does not wish the reader to agree with the theories of justice outlined by Glaucon and Adeimantus in Book II, part 1. However, it is Socrates' challenge in the dialectic enquiry to convince the respondents and the reader of the theories advanced concerning the ideal state and soul.

Early in the dialectic enquiry, Socrates brings in the notion of specialisation of labour. He asserts that the community will need skilled people to supply its needs. This includes a farmer, builder, weaver and shoemaker (369d). He then claims that each man has a natural capacity for one job and that he should stick to that role within the community. It is surprising that Adeimantus gives his agreement to this point without raising any questions (369d-370c). There is no obvious reason at this stage of the enquiry why it would be wrong for a member of the community to engage in more than one area of work.¹¹ Later, at 374a, Glaucon asks whether the citizens could fight for themselves. In response to this Socrates asserts that the state would need a specialist army and Glaucon gives his agreement to this without seeking any clarification (374c-e). The notion of specialisation of labour that Socrates raises in connection with the simple community appears to prefigure the theory of the just state

and just soul as outlined by Socrates in *Republic* Book IV. Specialisation of labour

¹⁰ Blondell (2002, p. 200) alerts the reader to the dominance of the character Socrates in this method of enquiry and the faith in his authority displayed by the respondents. However, this observation from Blondell does not take account of the significant interruptions made by Glaucon and Adeimantus in the dialectic enquiry in *Republic* Books V and VI. These interruptions are considered in chapters 4 and 5 of this study.

¹¹ Socrates' reason for advancing the theory of specialisation of labour becomes clearer in Book IV and particularly at 434a-c, where he notes that it would be especially harmful for the state for a worker to enter the auxiliary class or for an auxiliary to enter the guardian class. He asserts that it would be the worst of evils for the three classes to interchange their jobs. This issue is discussed further by Socrates and the respondents in *Republic* Books VIII and IX, where they consider the decline of the ideal state and soul and they conclude that the ideal state would eventually become a tyranny. The decline of the ideal state and soul is considered in section 3 of this chapter.

proves to be an essential element of the just state and soul.¹²

Significantly, by introducing the notion of specialisation of labour, Socrates provides an alternative to the view championed by the fictitious character Thrasymachus, the sophist in the *Republic* Book I. Socrates is trying to find what would comprise a just state for the good of all its citizens. Whilst Thrasymachus is concerned with what he calls justice, which is really injustice, can offer to the individual and in particular the ruler. It also moves the discussion away from the interruptions from Glaucon and Adeimantus in Book II, part 1, where they assert that justice is only good for the benefits that it brings to people and not in itself. As the enquiry continues in Book II, part 2, Adeimantus gives his approval to the points being advanced by Socrates and he seeks clarification where necessary. When they have reached agreement on the basic elements of a civilised society, Socrates asks where justice can be found within the community (371e).

At this point there is an unexpected and dramatic interruption from Glaucon who protests about the basic nature of the society that Socrates has described. With regard to the food and drink that the community would consume Glaucon asserts 'that's pretty plain fare for a feast, isn't it' (372c). He then goes on to say 'Really, Socrates, that's just the fodder you would provide if you were founding a community of pigs' (372d). In response to this interruption from Glaucon, Socrates agrees to look beyond the very basic needs of a community in the hope of discovering 'how justice and injustice are bred in a community' (372e).

This is the first significant interruption since the dialectic enquiry began at 368a. It demonstrates to the reader that Glaucon is still following the enquiry closely and participating in the discussion. The interruption is positive in that it results in Socrates expanding upon the initial community that he described. This can be compared with the interruptions from Thrasymachus in Book I which were negative as they did not result in any positive theories concerning justice being established. The interruption from Glaucon lays the foundation for the enquiry into the just state and just soul in Book IV and the theories that are outlined in the later books. These theories would not have been relevant to the basic community outlined by Socrates in Book II, part 2.

¹² Kahn 1993, p. 140.

This is an example where Glaucon feeds into the dialectical enquiry by making Socrates change his position. This did not happen in the elenchus exchanges in Book I. I would go further than Blondell who sees Glaucon as simply enabling Socrates to develop the argument further in this example.¹³ I would also go further than Guthrie who claims that Glaucon's interruption at this point in the dialogue is simply a contrived interruption to the main argument.¹⁴ The interruption from Glaucon at this stage of the dialogue leads the reader to question why the character Socrates is depicted by Plato as putting forward the very basic community first rather than a more recognisable picture of society. This leaves the reader somewhat confused as to which of the two communities Plato wished to promote. It is interesting that later in the enquiry in the *Republic* it becomes apparent that the tripartite state as outlined by Socrates and the respondents, is an ideal, like the basic community, and it is unlikely that it could ever exist in reality (592a-b, Book IX).¹⁵

The interruption from Glaucon also appears to be a breakthrough in that it seems to give the characters Glaucon and Adeimantus the confidence to interrupt later in the dialectic enquiry, when they are not fully satisfied with the account that Socrates is giving. This sets a trend for the remainder of the dialectic enquiry in the *Republic*. The other significant interruptions from Glaucon and Adeimantus in the remaining Books of the *Republic* are considered in chapters 4 and 5 of this study.

As Socrates sets about looking into an enlarged community in response to Glaucon's interruption, he makes a surprising comment concerning the basic community. He asserts that 'For though the society we have described seems to me to be the true one, like a man in health, there's nothing to prevent us, if you wish, studying one in a fever' (372e). This suggests that the basic community that Socrates puts forward in the first instance appeals to him. Nevertheless, the basic community would not appear to comply with the requirements of the just state and just soul as outlined by Socrates in Book IV and the later theories concerning knowledge included in the

¹³ Blondell 2002, p. 207.

¹⁴ Guthrie 1975, p. 446.

¹⁵ Morrison (2007, pp. 250-254) provides an interesting discussion on the possibility of the basic community, which was advanced by Socrates in *Republic* Book II. He asserts that the basic community is a utopia that could exist on earth. However, he considers the ideal state, as outlined by Socrates in *Republic* Book IV, to be a paradigm that could not exist in reality. In my view, both the basic community and the ideal state are presented by Plato as ideals, rather than communities that could exist on earth.

remaining Books of the *Republic*.¹⁶ Indeed, in his response to Glaucon, Socrates says 'All right, I understand. We are to study not only the origins of society, but also society when it enjoys the luxuries of civilization' (372e). Importantly, the enlarged city allows for the introduction of the guardians and auxiliaries who will play a key role in the just city.

Socrates and the respondents proceed to consider the needs of an enlarged state. He observes that there will be a need for people within the state to engage in a wider range of occupations in order to meet the requirements and demands of the population (373a-c). The increase in population will result in the state seeking to increase its territory. As a result of this, the state will be forced to engage in wars with neighbouring states in pursuit of territory (373d).

Although Glaucon and Adeimantus both act as respondents in the dialectic enquiry, Socrates engages with only one of these respondents at any one point in the dialogue. This is in keeping with the elenchus method in Book I where Socrates engages with one respondent at a time, Cephalus, then Polemarchus and then Thrasymachus. It is also in keeping with the display oration method in Book II, part 1, where Glaucon and Adeimantus carry out individual exchanges with Socrates. Nevertheless, as the dialectic enquiry continues, from Book II, part 2 onwards, the characters of Glaucon and Adeimantus become more alike with one or other of them taking the lead in the discussion with Socrates.¹⁷ Also, in the later Books of the *Republic*, Glaucon and Adeimantus take turns in interrupting at strategic points in the enquiry. Perhaps the length of the enquiry in the *Republic* prompted Plato to include two main respondents in order to make it more realistic dramatically. Notably, the characters of Glaucon and Adeimantus would not have been suited to the elenchus method as it requires respondents who display strong views of their own, which they are unwilling to give up, for example, Thrasymachus and Polemarchus.¹⁸

¹⁶ As Annas (1981, p. 78) observes, the basic city advanced by Socrates does not appear to have a clear place in the overall moral argument of the *Republic*. It would appear to the reader that Plato's reason for introducing the basic city was to establish the specialisation principle.

¹⁷ Blondell 2002, p. 220.

¹⁸ As observed in the typology of key respondents in the introductory chapter of this study, Polemarchus is depicted as less aggressive than and not as clever as Thrasymachus in the *Republic*.

At the end of Book II, part 2, Socrates concludes that 'our properly good Guardian will have the following characteristics: a philosophic disposition, high spirits, speed, and strength' and in response to this Glaucon says 'I entirely agree' (376c). This is an important development in the dialogue. It enables Socrates and the respondents to move forward with the discussion that follows concerning the first stage of the education of the guardians. The positive conclusion to the enquiry at this stage can be compared with the negative end to each of the elenchus exchanges in Book I which ended in *aporia* or deadlock. It also demonstrates that despite his earlier interruption at 372c-e, Book II, part 2, Glaucon has now reached agreement with Socrates concerning the basic needs of the community. The silence of Adeimantus, Thrasymachus, Polemarchus and the wider audience appears to be designed to suggest that they agree with the theories being outlined by Socrates at this point and are willing to let him develop these theories further.¹⁹

This leaves the reader with some concern regarding the dialectic method. From 375a-376c Socrates considers, with the help of the respondents, the qualities required in the guardians. Significantly, the guardian class has not yet been split into guardians proper and auxiliaries. Despite the controversial nature of what Socrates is putting forward in this passage, there is no significant reaction from Glaucon or Adeimantus. This is surprising as the qualities that are required in the guardians are not those normally associated with a ruler. These include 'gentleness towards his own fellows and neighbours' and 'a philosophic disposition and a love of learning' (376b-c).

Perhaps, the lack of intervention by the respondents when Socrates gives the qualities required in the guardians is because of the recent change to the dialectic method of enquiry in the dialogue. Some have argued that Glaucon and Adeimantus are being depicted at this stage as agreeing with Socrates in order to encourage the reader to do so too.²⁰ Another possibility is that the respondents may need time to adjust to this method and to know when to speak up and when not to do so.

Perhaps, it is necessary for them to remain mainly quiet for long spells to enable

¹⁹ In the discussion on wider issues in chapter 1 of this study, it is argued that Thrasymachus' silence at the end of the *Republic* does not convince the reader that Thrasymachus is in agreement with Socrates. Similarly, in the discussion on wider issues in chapter 2, it is noted that the silence of Glaucon and Adeimantus in Book X, part 2 after the Myth of Er, does not convince the reader that they are in agreement with Socrates.

²⁰ As noted in the introductory chapter of this study, Kraut (2002, p. 7) asserts that Plato's aim in constructing philosophical dramas including the *Republic* is to persuade the reader to adopt the positions being advanced in the dialogue.

Socrates to advance substantial theories that can then be reviewed where necessary. Likewise, the reader and audience need time to adjust to this new method of enquiry.

Another possible explanation, is that Plato intends the reader to be concerned at this point of the dialogue and to be critical of the theories being advanced through the dialectic method. The reader begins to feel the need to take on the role of the respondent at some points in the enquiry and this becomes a feature of the dialectic method of enquiry in the *Republic*. This is a complex issue. The reader recognises that there are some points in the dialectic enquiry in the *Republic* where the silence of Glaucon and Adeimantus appears simply to represent their agreement with Socrates. However, the silence of Glaucon and Adeimantus at other points in the dialectic enquiry becomes a cause of concern to the reader as the enquiry proceeds.

(Section 2)

The dialectic method of enquiry: Justice in the state and the soul

Having laid the foundations of the state in Book II, part 2 and Book III, Socrates proceeds to consider justice in the state and the individual. In Book IV, Socrates and the respondents continue to adopt the dialectic method of enquiry, which enables them to provide positive theories concerning justice. On a first reading of the dialectic enquiry in Book IV, the reader gains the impression that Socrates is in control of the discussion and confident about the theories that he is putting forward. But, a more detailed study of Book IV suggests to the reader that this is not necessarily the case. While giving a positive thesis overall, there are a number of examples in book IV where Socrates shows signs of hesitation. This section considers the theories outlined by Socrates in Book IV concerning justice in the state and soul and the input from Glaucon and Adeimantus in the enquiry.

a) Justice in the state

At the beginning of Book IV, Adeimantus makes an interesting and important objection. He asserts 'But look here, Socrates, how would you answer the objection that you aren't making your guardians particularly happy' (417b-419a)? He then argues that the guardians, as described by Socrates, would be more like "hired mercenaries" than rulers (420a). In response to this objection from Adeimantus,

Socrates observes that as they continue with the enquiry they are likely to find that the guardians will live very happy lives in the ideal state (420b). He also notes that the purpose of establishing the ideal state is for the happiness of the community as a whole and not just one of the classes within the community (420b). In the *Republic* Book IV Socrates proceeds to consider what would comprise a just individual. This involves looking at justice in the city first and then in the individual.²¹ He observes that 'We thought it would be easier to see justice in the individual if we looked for it first in some larger field which also contained it. We thought this larger field was the state, and so we set about finding an ideal state, being sure we should find justice in it because it was good' (434e). Socrates claims that a just state would possess three essential virtues or qualities: wisdom, courage and self-discipline. Moreover, a just state would be comprised of three distinct groups of people: guardians, auxiliaries and workers (427e-432b).

Socrates asserts that the guardians would rule over the state and through their knowledge they would make the state wise. Their education and upbringing would make them knowledgeable and it would prepare them for this role within the state. They would have knowledge of the Forms. This would provide the guardians with the ability to plan overall for the good of the city. Socrates asks 'is there any form of knowledge to be found among any of the citizens in the state we've just founded which is exercised not on behalf of any particular interest but on behalf of the city as a whole, in such a way as to benefit the state both in its internal and external relations' (428c-d)? According to Socrates, the guardians would fulfil this role within the state. Unlike some traditional rulers, the guardians would aim to rule for the good of the state rather than for their personal gain or honour.²² It is worth pointing out that the guardians would also gain personally from the introduction of the ideal state. It would provide them with the environment in which they could seek to gain knowledge of the Forms and also put this knowledge into practical use in ruling the state. It would also give philosophers a higher status within the community.

²¹ Rutherford (1995, p. 211) observes that the *Republic* becomes more difficult and demanding for the reader as it progresses. The enquiry into the just state and just soul in Book IV is a good example of this aspect of the dialectic method.

²² Here Socrates appears to be looking ahead to the second stage of the education of the guardians as outlined in *Republic* Books VI and VII, which includes studying the Forms. However, at this point in the *Republic*, the reader has only been introduced to the first stage of the education of the guardians as outlined in Book III, which does not include knowledge of the Forms.

It is notable that Socrates appears to be very much in control of the discussion at this stage of the enquiry with Glaucon following his lead. In response to a question from Socrates, Glaucon acknowledges 'All you can reasonably expect of me is to follow your lead and see things when you point them out' (432c). This can be compared with the way Glaucon is depicted in Book II, part 1, where he adopts the display oration method with confidence and challenges Socrates. However, the change in approach by Socrates and the respondents has resulted in the enquiry becoming less focussed on individual concerns relating to justice and injustice and it has enabled them to explore wider issues.²³ Nevertheless, despite his newly found confidence, Socrates also shows signs of doubt when he admits that they have reached a 'pretty impassable' and 'obscure' point in the enquiry (432c).

Through the dialectic enquiry Socrates and the respondents agree that the role of the auxiliaries would be to fight for and defend the state, under the rule of the guardians. Their education and upbringing would make them courageous and this would enable them to fulfil their role (429b-c). The workers would produce the food and goods for the state and also trade with other states. They would be expected to act in deference to the guardians and the auxiliaries. In order to do this, they would need to display the quality of self-discipline (430e). Indeed, all three classes in the ideal state would be required to display the quality of self-discipline by recognising their place within society. But, the quality of self-discipline would be displayed differently in the different classes within the state. Socrates asserts that a state which is self-disciplined would be master of itself, that is, the better part would rule the worse part (431b). In the ideal state, the workers would be ruled by the guardians and they would be protected by the auxiliaries. Now that Socrates and the respondents have identified the three classes within society and their corresponding virtues, they are left with the task of identifying what comprises justice within the state. At this point in the enquiry, Socrates appears to recover his confidence. He says 'Tally ho, Glaucon! I think we are on the track, and our quarry won't altogether escape us' (432d). Following further consideration, Socrates and the respondents conclude that justice in the state is self-discipline, that is, 'keeping what is properly one's own and doing one's own job'

²³ Blondell 2002, p. 209.

(433d-434a).²⁴

In the course of the dialectic enquiry into the just state, Socrates gains approval from Glaucon and Adeimantus at regular stages, with Glaucon speaking on behalf of both of them. Examples of the responses given by Glaucon include: 'That's true' (428a), 'That is all perfectly true' (429a), 'Then I accept your description of courage' (430c), 'I'm quite sure of it' (431e), and 'It must be' (433c). However, at one stage, Glaucon demonstrates impatience and complains that Socrates is taking a long time leading up to what he has to say (432e). Once they have found what justice in the state consists in, Socrates asserts that if they find that the pattern that they have established for the state also applies to the individual then they can accept this tripartite division. But, if they find that it does not apply to the individual, they will need to start the enquiry into the just state and soul again (434d).

The enquiry into the just state ends with Glaucon saying 'I entirely agree with what you say' (434d). This section of the enquiry alerts the reader to an important difference between the dialectic method and the two earlier methods of enquiry adopted by Plato in Book I and Book II, part 1, that is, the elenchus and display oration methods. Through the dialectic enquiry into the just state, Socrates and the respondents put forward positive theories, following from the initial discussion in Book II, part 2, on the basic state. This constructive method of enquiry enables Socrates and the respondents to provide the positive theories concerning knowledge in the remaining books of the *Republic*. Nevertheless, the lack of input from Glaucon and Adeimantus continues to cause some concern for the reader and this seems intentional on the part of Plato. Glaucon and Adeimantus could have raised some serious objections to the tripartite division of the state at this stage of the enquiry as these divisions appear to be rather unnatural and in particular with regard to the mix of people that would be included in the class of workers.²⁵ However, they do raise serious issues later in the *Republic* and these are considered in chapters 4 and 5 of this enquiry.

²⁴ The reader needs to bear in mind that the just state as outlined by Socrates is inward looking in that it does not appear to be concerned with establishing just relationships with other states. Likewise, justice in the individual is concerned with the relationship of the parts of the individual's soul rather than the way the individual behaves towards other people.

²⁵ Mitchell and Lucas 2003, p. 26.

b) Justice In the Individual

Now that Socrates and the respondents have established what a just state would be comprised of, they proceed to consider how this might be applied to the individual. Importantly, in the enquiry into justice in the individual, Socrates concentrates on the inner workings of the agent. This differs from Glaucon and Adeimantus in Book II, part 1, where they concentrate on the actions taken by the agent and the rewards and punishments associated with these actions. Socrates observes 'So there will be no difference between a just man and a just city, so far as the element of justice goes' (435b). Glaucon gives his agreement here on behalf of Adeimantus and himself. At 435c Glaucon jokes with Socrates about the length of the enquiry that they have embarked upon at this point in the dialogue. This is followed by an interesting comment from Socrates where he appears to be referring to the theories that come up in the later Books of the *Republic*. Socrates says 'we shall never find an exact answer by the method of argument we are using in our present discussion - to get one we should have to go much further afield but we can probably find one that will be satisfactory by the standards we have so far used in our enquiry' (435c-d). Here Plato seems to be suggesting to the reader that there is a limit to what can be achieved by Socrates and the respondents in the dialectic enquiry in the *Republic* and that it is only the start of the enquiry into justice.

Socrates and the respondents agree to proceed on this basis. But, the reader is left with the impression that there is some uncertainty about the method of enquiry being adopted at this stage of the enquiry. As a result of this, the reader is unsure how seriously to take the theories being put forward by Socrates and the respondents in Book IV. Nevertheless, the lack of confidence displayed here by Socrates can be compared with the high level of confidence displayed by Thrasymachus, Glaucon and Adeimantus in Books I and II, part 1. Perhaps Plato is attempting to warn the reader and audience in the background not to be taken in by the confidence of the speaker.

Socrates regains his confidence and he sets out to establish that there are three parts to the soul: reason, spirit and appetite.²⁶ In order to demonstrate that there is a division between reason and desire within the soul, Socrates gives the principle of

²⁶ For an appreciation of the historical impact of the tripartite division of the soul as advanced by Socrates, see (Mitchell and Lucas 2003, p. 31). For a comparison between Plato and Aristotle on the relationship between the elements within the soul, see (Norman 1983, pp. 51-55).

opposites 'one and the same thing cannot act or be affected in opposite ways at the same time in the same part of it and in relation to the same object' (436b). If this was the case, then there would be more than one element within the same part of a particular thing, for example the soul. Socrates develops this point further by considering whether something can be at rest and in motion at the same time, with regard to the same part of itself. We are given the possible counter-example of a man who is standing still, but at the same time moving his hands and his head. With regard to this example, Socrates notes that because it is two different parts of the man that are at rest and in motion at the same time, this does not demonstrate that there is a division within one part of him (436c). In order to demonstrate this, one part of the man, for example his leg, would have to be at rest and in motion at the same time.

Socrates also gives the possible counter-example of an archer pulling the bow with one of his hands and pushing it with the other. Again, this would not be an example of something being at rest and in motion at the same time with regard to the same part of itself (439b). For this to be the case, the archer would have to be pulling and pushing the bow at the same time with just one of his hands. Socrates then gives the possible counter-example of a spinning top which is both at rest and in motion at the same time. He considers whether it is the same part or two different parts of the spinning top that are doing the opposite thing at the same time. With regard to the spinning top example, Socrates concludes that 'it is not the same parts of such bodies that are at rest and in motion; they have both an axis and a circumference, and their axis, as it has no inclination in any direction, is at rest, but their circumference is in motion' (436d-e).

At this stage of the enquiry, Glaucon and Adeimantus remain mainly silent with Glaucon responding on behalf of both of them. He gives positive responses to Socrates which include: 'Granted' (436c), 'That is quite correct' (436e), 'Yes, that's the thing to do' (437b). Having been given this support from Glaucon, Socrates broadens the discussion to include opposite states of the mind or soul as well as opposite actions. He asks 'would you not class assent and dissent, impulse and aversion to something, attraction and repulsion and the like as opposite actions or states - no matter which' (437b)? We are given the example of a person being thirsty but at the same time being unwilling to drink. Socrates argues that, given the

principle of opposites, in such a situation 'there is one element in their minds which bids them drink, and a second which prevents them and masters the first' (439c). Socrates asserts, on the strength of his argument, that the soul is comprised of at least two parts, reason and appetite (439d). In this example, reason is acting for the good of the soul overall. Notably, in response to this, Glaucon answers in agreement 'Yes, that is a reasonable view to take' (439e).

In Book IV, once Socrates has put forward the case for there being two parts to the soul, that is reason and appetite, he proceeds to consider whether there is a third part to the soul. He gives the example of Leontius, son of Aglaeon, who was on his way from Piraeus one day when he noticed some corpses lying on the ground nearby with the executioner standing by them. Leontius found that he had a strong desire to look at the corpses. At the same time he felt angry with himself for having this desire, but his desire won over him in the end and he looked at the bodies. Socrates asserts that in this case it is the appetitive part of the soul which is urging the agent to look at the bodies and it is another part of the soul, spirit or indignation, which is causing him to feel angry with himself. This leads Socrates to conclude that there is a division between desire and spirit within the soul and that therefore there is a third element within the soul, that is, spirit (439e-440a). In response to this, Glaucon answers in agreement 'Yes it does' (440a).

With regard to this example, Socrates argues that 'we often see other instances of a man whose desires are trying to force him to do something his reason disapproves of, cursing himself and getting indignant at their violence' (440a-b). He gives the example of political groups struggling against each other with spirit or indignation taking the side of reason. Here, spirit takes the side of reason against appetite because it appreciates that reason knows what is the best course of action to be taken for the overall good of the individual.²⁷ In the example of Leontius, the element of spirit within his soul is fighting on the side of reason to win over the desire to look at the bodies, but it loses the fight. Socrates suggests that in the majority of situations this would not happen and that the agent's reason, backed up by his or her spirit, would succeed in overcoming any unsavoury desires, which the agent may have. He notes 'I don't suppose you've ever observed indignation, either in yourself or in anyone else, taking the side of the desires and resisting the decision of reason' (440b).

²⁷ Irwin 1995, p. 212.

Importantly, the element of spirit within the soul can be educated unlike the appetitive element.

As the dialectic enquiry into justice in the individual proceeds, Glaucon and Adeimantus remain mainly silent, with Glaucon continuing to make positive comments at regular intervals and occasionally seeking clarification. The positive comments from Glaucon at this stage of the enquiry include: 'So it seems' (439c), 'It looks like it' (439d), 'No certainly not' (440b). At 438b, Glaucon seeks clarification by saying 'I don't understand.' At this point in the enquiry, the respondents are surprisingly quiet. It would seem that as the dialectic enquiry proceeds in Book IV the respondents are depicted as being more in agreement with Socrates and providing little input into the discussion. Some have suggested that the superiority displayed by Socrates in the dialectic method of enquiry in the *Republic* leads to the respondents accepting the controversial theories that he is outlining.²⁸ However, this state of affairs does not continue for the rest of the *Republic*, with Glaucon and Adeimantus making significant interruptions at strategic intervals in some of the remaining Books.

Socrates seeks to establish a division between spirit and reason. He gives the illustration of an agent who thinks that he is being wronged. In this example, the agent's spirit or indignation makes him boil over with anger and it leads him to fight for what he thinks is right. This would lead the agent to suffer hunger and cold, and even death for what he or she thinks is right. Socrates notes that it is the element of reason within the soul which is responsible for controlling the spirit and 'calls it back to heel and calms it, like a shepherd calls his dog' (440c-d). The suggestion here seems to be that if spirit were left unchecked it would be detrimental to the agent. Unlike spirit, the element of reason within the soul is capable of taking an objective view overall for the good of the individual.²⁹ This leads Socrates to conclude that there is a division between spirit and reason within the soul and that the soul is comprised of three distinct elements, reason, spirit and appetite. Notably, Glaucon responds in agreement 'There must be a third element' (441a).

Having given his examples for the division of the soul into three distinct elements (434d-441c), Socrates claims that, as in the state, an individual soul has three parts or

²⁸ Blondell 2002, p. 210.

²⁹ Irwin 1995, p. 215.

elements: reason, spirit, and appetite.³⁰ It is worth observing at this point that serious questions have been raised concerning the tripartite soul as outlined by Socrates in Book IV. Some have found fault with the principle of opposites as put forward by Socrates.³¹ While, some hold that Plato is wrong in his assumption that having a desire to do something and having a desire not to do something are incompatible opposites, for example, being thirsty but not drinking.³² It is surprising that Glaucon and Adeimantus do not ask any questions concerning the tripartite soul. There are many other questions that have been raised by recent commentators that Glaucon and Adeimantus could have asked. At this point in the dialogue, the reader feels the need to take on the role of the respondent and this seems to be intentional on the part of Plato.

One problem that the respondents could have considered is that each of the three elements within the tripartite soul as put forward by Socrates appears to be tripartite, leading to a vicious regress. In order for the three elements within the soul to play their prescribed role, they appear to need a bit of all three elements. This would explain how they make choices. For example, it would appear that the appetitive element within the soul would need a degree of reason, in order to appreciate and be led by the element of reason overall within the soul.³³ Another question that they could have considered is whether the city/soul analogy provided by Socrates is sound. This takes the reader back to the beginning of the dialectic enquiry at 368a-e where Socrates alerts the respondents to the difficulty and obscurity of the subject that they are enquiring into.

According to Socrates, the elements within the soul correspond with the three classes which were found within the state, that is: the guardians, auxiliaries and workers. A just soul would be one where each of its three elements were playing their prescribed role with reason in control and supported by the element of spirit. In the case of the

³⁰ Irwin (1995, p. 217) observes that the relationship between the three elements of the soul as put forward by Socrates is asymmetrical. Reason and spirit are both opposed to appetite but appetite is not opposed to either of them. Furthermore, reason is opposed to spirit on some occasions. The tripartite theory of the soul provides Socrates with grounds for asserting that different actions can be attributed to different parts of the soul.

³¹ Robinson 1971, pp. 38-48.

³² Stalley 1975, pp. 110-128.

³³ Irwin (1995, pp. 218-222) asserts that Socrates can avoid this objection by showing that the elements of spirit and appetite are capable of being led by the element of reason within the soul without having a separate rational element of their own.

guardians, the element of reason would be dominant within the soul and they would display the virtue of wisdom.³⁴ The dominant element in the soul of the auxiliaries would be spirit and they would display the virtue of courage. In the case of the workers, the appetitive element would be dominant within their souls and they would display the virtue of self-discipline (441c-444e). Here Socrates is pointing to the internal benefits of justice which lead to mental happiness for the guardians.³⁵ Significantly, in *Republic* Books I and II, part 1, Polemarchus, Thrasymachus, Glaucon and Adeimantus all associated justice with the individual's behaviour rather than their inner state.

It is important to note that the souls of the auxiliaries and workers are comprised of all three elements but that spirit or appetite is in control rather than reason. It has been suggested by some that the workers in the ideal state are driven purely by desire.³⁶ Some have recognised that Socrates describes the appetitive element differently in different parts of *Republic*, sometimes emphasising the bodily desires, and sometimes giving it a broader role.³⁷ In his depiction of the just state and the just soul, Socrates sets out to demonstrate that justice can be good in itself and not only for its consequences. We are told that justice is good in itself because of the internal benefits which it provides for the agent. In comparison with this, Socrates asserts that injustice is a form of civil war with the wrong element of the soul in control (444a-b). The auxiliaries and workers would only have partly just souls. The guardians would be the only members of the state who would be in a position to achieve full happiness. It has been suggested by some that because they share the first stage of education with the guardians, the auxiliaries would value justice for the effect that it has on their souls. But, I think this goes too far as it is only in the second stage of their education that the guardians gain a full picture of justice in the city and the soul.³⁸

³⁴ In contrast to the just soul of the guardian as outlined in Book IV, Socrates provides the striking illustration of the many headed beast in Book IX. This comprises the many headed beast (representing appetite), the lion (representing spirit) and the man (representing reason). In the case of the unjust soul, the many headed beast is in control rather than the man (Book IX, 588c-589a).

³⁵ For a useful discussion on justice in the individual in *Republic* Book IV, see Norman (1983, pp. 22-31). See especially p. 27 where consideration is given to the repression of desires in the tripartite soul.

³⁶ Scott 2000, pp. 19-37.

³⁷ Sayers 2002, p. 72.

³⁸ Kamtekar 1998, pp. 315-339.

Significantly, the guardians would be the only members of the city with perfectly just souls, that is, with reason in control. Another point to note is that it is likely that the guardians could experience some tension between their duty to take their turn in ruling the city and their personal desire to contemplate the Forms. It is likely that they would be happier contemplating the Forms than ruling. Some have argued that the guardians would be led by obedience to the laws to take their turn in ruling.³⁹ However, in some parts of the *Republic*, the guardians are portrayed as being above the law, for example in the founding myth of the ideal state where they manipulate the people (414b-415d and 540e-541a). Also, in the drawing of lots for the mating of the guardians (460a-b). Some have suggested that by taking their turn in ruling the guardians would be able to satisfy their desires more completely.⁴⁰ Another concern is that the guardians could experience difficulty in applying the knowledge that they have gained of the Forms to ruling the city.⁴¹

The enquiry into justice in the state and the individual in Book IV ends with Socrates saying 'So we shan't be very far wrong if we claim to have discovered what the just man and the just state are, and in what their justice consists.' Glaucon gives his approval to this by saying 'No, we shan't' and they agree to make the claim (444a). The silence of Glaucon, Adeimantus and the wider audience during the course of the dialectic enquiry in Book IV, leaves the reader in doubt as to Plato's aim in portraying them in this way. Indeed, at this stage of the enquiry, Thrasymachus could have argued that Socrates has not yet proved that the person with a perfectly just soul would perform just actions as he could pursue selfish interests instead.⁴² Also, it appears that Socrates has not fully answered Adeimantus' objection at 419a that the guardians would not be particularly happy in the ideal state.

The theory of justice outlined by Socrates in Book IV relies on the theories that are provided in the later Books of the dialogue. In the later Books of the *Republic*, Socrates needs to demonstrate that he has an argument for justice, rather than an argument for psychic order, which can defeat the arguments advanced by the respondents in Books I and II, part 1. In particular, in his consideration of unjust states and unjust souls in Books VIII and IX of the *Republic*, Socrates seeks to provide

³⁹ Brown 2000, pp. 1-17.

⁴⁰ Vernezze 1992, pp. 331-349.

⁴¹ For further consideration of some of these issues, see (Dorter 2001, pp. 335-356).

⁴² Mitchell and Lucas 2003, p. 35.

further backing to the arguments given by him in Book IV.⁴³ But, the discussion of unjust states and souls in Books VIII and IX also raises some doubts about the ideal state. This issue is considered in the next section of this chapter.

The importance of the role of Glaucon and Adeimantus in the dialectic method of enquiry becomes clearer in Books V and VI of the *Republic*, where they make a number of dramatic interruptions into the dialogue. These interruptions result in another change of direction in the enquiry. The interruptions from Glaucon and Adeimantus in Books V and VI are considered in detail in the remaining chapters of this study.

Section 3

Wider issues concerning *Republic* Book II, part 2, 368a-376c, and Book IV and in particular how they relate to the earlier and later Books

a) The decline of the ideal state as outlined in Books VIII and IX

Early in Book VIII, Socrates observes that in time the ideal state would decay. He states that 'since all created things must decay, even a social order of this kind cannot last for all time, but will decline' (546a). In the course of Books VIII and IX, Socrates provides a detailed account of how the dissolution of the ideal state would come about. Importantly, this discussion is prompted by Glaucon at 543c-544b, Book VIII, where he reminds Socrates that they were about to consider the question of imperfect states at the end of Book IV, before the interruption from Adeimantus concerning women and the family in the guardian class at the beginning of Book V. This forces Socrates to provide further detail about an issue that he had previously referred to briefly at the end of Book IV and the beginning of Book V, 445b-449a.

In their consideration of unjust states and souls, Socrates and the respondents conclude that the ideal state would deteriorate firstly into a timarchy, then into an oligarchy, then a democracy, and eventually into a tyranny. Likewise, the soul would no longer be controlled by reason. It would deteriorate in the same pattern as the ideal state and would eventually become unjust and be led by unnecessary desires, as in the case of the tyrant. Socrates provides an interesting discussion of the happiness and unhappiness of the different character types (576b-588a, Book IX).

⁴³ Irwin 1995, p. 256.

He concludes that the tyrant would be the least just and least happy type of person. This is intended as a direct attack on the arguments given by Thrasymachus in Book I in support of the tyrant.

Notably, at the end of Book IX and towards the end of the dialectic enquiry into the nature of justice in the *Republic*, Socrates and Glaucon, who is acting as respondent at this point, express doubt about the possibility of the ideal state ever becoming a reality on earth. Socrates then observes 'Perhaps, it is laid up as a pattern in heaven, where he who wishes can see it and found it in his own heart' (592b) and Glaucon is depicted as agreeing with him.⁴⁴ In my view, this is one of the most puzzling aspects of the *Republic*. It puts in doubt all the positive theories that have been advanced by Socrates, Glaucon and Adeimantus since the beginning of the dialectic enquiry at 368a, Book II.

In his attempt to defeat the theories advanced by Thrasymachus in Book I and Glaucon and Adeimantus in Book II, part 1, Socrates has provided an elaborate theory of an ideal state that is highly unlikely ever to exist. Also, should the ideal state ever become a reality, it would decline and eventually become a tyranny. Some commentators have defended Plato against the criticism that the ideal state is a utopia that would not exist on earth. They note that the ideal state provides a useful theoretical example of a just state.⁴⁵ However, it seems clear to the reader that in their challenge to Socrates in Book II, part I, Glaucon and Adeimantus were expecting Socrates to provide a theory of justice that could be put into practice. The lack of input or objection from Glaucon and Adeimantus at this stage of the enquiry makes the reader want to act as respondent and question the usefulness of the theory of the ideal state and soul as outlined by Socrates in the *Republic*. In addition, the reader would want to ask questions concerning Plato's intention in portraying the ideal state and soul in this way.

⁴⁴ Morrison (2007, pp. 232-255) provides a useful discussion on the utopian character of the ideal city as advanced by Socrates in the *Republic*. He concludes, and I agree, that the ideal city is a paradigm, which is useful as an account of justice in the soul, but not for the city. Morrison asserts 'All in all, despite its magnificent rhetoric, Socrates' appeal to the heavenly city in 592 is not very successful' (p. 250).

⁴⁵ Burnyeat (1999, pp. 297-308) considers the practicability of the ideal state as advanced by Socrates in the *Republic*. He asserts that the fact that the ideal state has not existed does not make the theory false (p. 308). Schofield (2006, pp. 194-249) considers the utopian nature of the ideal state as outlined in the *Republic*. He notes the difficulty that Plato and other philosophers have faced in formulating a theory of justice that could be put into practice (pp. 239-240).

b) Other Issues relating to Book II, part 2, 368a-376c, and Book IV and the remaining Books of the *Republic*

There are a number of examples in Book IV that appear to pre-figure the later Books of the *Republic*. In Book IV, we are told that the guardians will be led by the element of reason within their souls and that they will display the virtue of wisdom. This provides a link with Book VI, where we are given the account of the Form of the Good as the ultimate object of knowledge (502c-509c), which the guardians will aspire to comprehend. In the ideal state, the guardians will be the only members of the state who will have the capacity to gain knowledge of the Forms. This knowledge will make the guardians wise. The second stage of the education of the guardians, as outlined in Book VII, will enable them to attempt to gain knowledge of the Form of the Good. Likewise, the account of the just state and just soul proves to be central to the defence of justice as advanced by Socrates in the *Republic* as a whole. But, it also relies on the theories concerning knowledge that are provided by Socrates in Books VI and VII of the *Republic*.

Socrates' use of the dialectic method has resulted in an original and highly controversial theory of justice being advanced by Socrates, with the apparent agreement of the respondents. The proposals that Socrates puts forward concerning the just state and just individual would require a complete change in the way that society is organised. It would result in the guardians ruling the state. The fact that Plato has linked knowledge with ruling is designed to make the suggestion to put the guardians in charge of the city more acceptable to the reader. This provides a link with the discussion of the role of the philosopher in society in Books V and VI. It also makes a connection with the discussion of imperfect states and souls in Books VIII and IX as discussed above where Socrates illustrates what would happen when reason is no longer in control.

The connections between Book IV and the later Books, lead the reader to question whether Plato had already worked out these later theories concerning knowledge when he wrote Book IV. If this was the case, it would have seemed more appropriate to include consideration of this directly after the discussion of the just state and the just soul in Book IV. However, at the end of Book IV, Socrates begins to enquire into unjust souls and states rather than providing any further clarification concerning the theory of justice outlined in Book IV. Another possibility is that the later

theories were formulated by Plato as he progressed with the enquiry into justice in the *Republic*, in order to provide backing for the theories outlined in Book IV of the dialogue.

It is also possible that Plato put forward the theory of justice in stages to enable the reader to digest it in small pieces without becoming confused. This would also cause less upset to anyone who might be offended by the theories being advanced. Once the reader has accepted the theories outlined in Book IV, the later theories are easier to accept, for example, the philosophers being put in charge of the state. It is also possible that Plato was reluctant to provide the finer details concerning the just state and just soul at first because he was worried that it might be too controversial. Nevertheless, the dialectic enquiry from Book II, part 2 to Book IV of the *Republic*, prepares the reader and audience for the theories that are outlined by Socrates in the later Books of the *Republic*.⁴⁶

In the dialectic enquiry in the *Republic* Book IV the character Socrates would appear to represent the guardians in the ideal state. But importantly, unlike the guardians, he has not yet gained knowledge of the Forms. Also, Socrates and the respondents have not yet perfected the dialectic method. Glaucon and Adeimantus would appear to represent the junior guardians, due to the fact that they assist Socrates in the search for knowledge of justice, but at times they do not display as high a level of understanding of the issues discussed as Socrates.⁴⁷ The silent audience in the background of the dialectic enquiry, which includes Polemarchus and Thrasymachus, seems somewhat representative of the workers in the ideal state due to their low level of input into the dialogue after Book I. This is in keeping with the ideal state where the workers would have no involvement in political matters or philosophical enquiry.

As noted above, the unjust souls as outlined by Socrates in Books VIII and IX are unjust because they do not have the correct element in control and are led by spirit or appetite rather than reason. This can be linked to the elenchus enquiries with Polemarchus and Thrasymachus in Book I. In these elenchus enquiries, the wrong character type takes the lead in each of the discussions. Polemarchus, who appears

⁴⁶ Kahn 1993, p. 142.

⁴⁷ Blondell (2002, pp. 211-213) identifies links between the characters of Glaucon and Adeimantus and the qualities required of the guardians in the ideal state.

to represent the workers (led by necessary and unnecessary appetites) in the ideal state and Thrasymachus who seems to represent the tyrant (led by unnecessary appetites) as outlined by Socrates in *Republic* Book IX take the lead in these enquiries, rather than Socrates, who represents the guardians (led by reason). Similarly, Glaucon and Adeimantus, who appear to represent the junior guardians, take the lead in the display oration method of enquiry in Book II, part 1, rather than Socrates, who represents the guardians. The role played by Glaucon, Adeimantus and the other respondents in the dialectic enquiry suggests to the reader that the elenchus and display oration methods as outlined in *Republic* Books I and II, part 1, are somewhat representative of the unjust state and unjust soul.

As the dialectic enquiry proceeds from Book II, part 2 to the end of Book IV, Socrates, Glaucon and Adeimantus gradually become settled in their new roles with Socrates taking the lead and Glaucon and Adeimantus remaining fairly silent. Socrates' confidence continues to develop in this part of the *Republic*. In Book IV, the respondents appear to have less influence over the direction of the enquiry. This is a change from Book II, part 1, 357a-367e, where the interventions from Glaucon and Adeimantus set the challenge for Socrates which takes up the rest of the *Republic*. It can also be compared with the interruption from Glaucon in Book II, part 2, which led to Socrates broadening the enquiry to include a less basic community (372d). As the dialectic enquiry progresses in Book IV, Glaucon and Adeimantus seem to change, for now, into more passive characters. This leads the reader to question why Plato did not introduce two new characters at this point of the dialogue. Perhaps Plato is suggesting here that by practising the dialectic method the agent will change for the better. Another possible aim of Plato is for the reader to change for the better by studying the dialogue and philosophy.

It is interesting to consider what would have happened if Plato had gone straight from Book IV to the discussion of imperfect states and souls in Books VIII and IX and left out the Books in-between. Would the just state and just individual as put forward by Socrates in Book IV have provided a sufficient account of justice? Would it have provided a sufficient answer to the challenge from Glaucon and Adeimantus in Book II, part 1? It is likely that it would have left too many questions unanswered and it would have required a sequel in the form of *Republic*, part 2, to provide the missing details.⁴⁸

⁴⁸ For some consideration of this issue, see (Rutherford 1995, pp. 211-212).

In his attempt to defend justice against the attacks from Glaucon and Adeimantus in Book II, part 1, and Thrasymachus in Book I, Socrates relies on the content of the remaining Books which includes, among other matters, consideration of women and the family in the guardian and auxiliary classes and the role of the philosopher in society.

Importantly, at the beginning of Book V, 449b-450a, Adeimantus makes a dramatic interruption to the dialectic enquiry, which results in a change in the direction of the discussion. This forces Socrates to give detailed consideration to the issue of women and the family in the guardian and auxiliary classes within the ideal state. The interruption from Adeimantus and the subsequent enquiry into the arrangements for women and the family in the guardian and auxiliary classes are the subject of the next chapter of this study.

Conclusion

In this chapter consideration has been given to Socrates' initial response to the challenge from Glaucon and Adeimantus in Book II, part 1. This included consideration of Book II, part 2 and also Book IV, where the theory of justice in the state and the soul is put forward by Socrates. Consideration has also been given to some wider issues relating to Book II, part 2 and Book IV of the *Republic* and in particular the decline of the ideal state and soul, as outlined by Socrates in Books VIII and IX. During the course of this enquiry it has become apparent that the role of Socrates and the respondents changes considerably from Book II, part 2, 368a onwards. The introduction of the dialectic method of enquiry has enabled Socrates and the respondents to advance positive theories concerning justice in the state and the soul. However, Plato seems to be sending mixed messages to the reader with Socrates putting forward theories in the *Republic*, which are questioned later by the respondents.

Despite the new found confidence displayed by Socrates in Book II, part 2 and Book IV of the *Republic*, there are examples of hesitation displayed by him, which raise a question as to whether Plato expected the reader to be convinced of the theories being advanced. In the parts of the *Republic* considered in this chapter, Plato, through the character of Socrates, has shown hesitancy, uncertainty and a lack of

resolve on a number of occasions: from being reluctant to commence the enquiry due to his lack of ability, to introducing a very basic community and then putting forward an expanded one. Then, when considering justice in the state and individual he starts with the big picture first. Also, he is reluctant to discuss the issue of women and children. This culminates in the doubt expressed by Socrates at 592a-b concerning the possibility of the ideal state.

I would go further than Blondell who suggests that the instances in the dialogue from Book II, part 2 onwards, where Socrates professes ignorance, are there to reassure the reader that the character Socrates is not being dogmatic.⁴⁹ Indeed, the reluctance displayed by Socrates encourages readers to think for themselves about the issues raised concerning justice in the state and the individual and raise questions regarding these theories. It also leaves the reader confused as to why Glaucon and Adeimantus do not interrupt at this stage of the enquiry. However, the situation changes in the next and later Books of the *Republic* where Glaucon and Adeimantus make a number of dramatic entries into the discussion which influence the course of the enquiry. These are considered in chapters 4 and 5 of this study.

⁴⁹ Blondell 2002, pp. 201-202.

Chapter 4

Adeimantus: Women and the family

Introduction

There are a number of dramatic interruptions and responses made by the respondents at intervals in the *Republic* Book II, 368a onwards. These often result in a change over of respondent. Some rudeness is displayed by the respondents on these occasions. These usually occur at a time when Socrates is putting forward a controversial theory or has just done so. There is a need for elaboration as Adeimantus points out that 'what is right needs explanation' of how it will come about (449c). This chapter considers the interruption from Adeimantus at the beginning of Book V, 449b-450a.

In section 1, consideration is given to the interruption from Adeimantus and on the response to this from Socrates. Sections 2 and 3 focus on the theories concerning women and the family as outlined by Socrates in Book V. They also focus on the method of enquiry adopted by Socrates and the input from the respondents Glaucon and Adeimantus. In section 4, consideration is given to some wider issues concerning the interruption from Adeimantus at the beginning of Book V and how this relates to the *Republic* overall. In particular, this chapter alerts the reader to the idealistic nature of the just state as advanced by Socrates in Book IV, which would appear to work better in theory than in reality.

(Section 1)

The interruption from Adeimantus at the beginning of Book V and the initial response from Socrates

Once Socrates has put forward the theory of the tripartite state and individual, he starts enquiring into the nature of imperfect states and characters.¹ At this point, there is an unexpected and dramatic interruption from Adeimantus who has been prompted to

¹ At this point in the dialogue, Socrates acts like he has more or less finished the enquiry. This also happened at the end of Book I when the discussion between Socrates and Thrasymachus was completed. However, unlike this example from Book IV, Book I ended inconclusively in *aporia*.

speak up by Polemarchus (449b-450a, Book V). We are told that Polemarchus, who was sitting near Adeimantus at the time, 'stretched out a hand and took hold of his coat at the shoulder.' He then asked Adeimantus 'What shall we do? Shall we let it go' (449b)? In response to Polemarchus, Adeimantus is abrupt with Socrates and urges him to provide more detail about the living arrangements for women and children in the auxiliary and guardian classes.² Here, Adeimantus is referring back to 423e, Book IV, where Socrates made a brief reference to women and the family and said 'a good many things we have for the moment omitted, such as the position of women, marriage, and the production of children, all of which ought so far as possible to be dealt with on the proverbial basis of "all things in common between friends".' Adeimantus accuses Socrates of being lazy and proceeding to consider other forms of constitution rather than dealing with this issue. Glaucon and Thrasymachus also speak up in support of Adeimantus here (450a).³ Glaucon then acts as respondent in this part of the dialogue.⁴

This interruption from Adeimantus takes the reader by surprise. It is the first significant interruption from Adeimantus since Book IV, 419a, and since 357a-367e, Book II, where Glaucon and Adeimantus gave their challenge to Socrates to demonstrate that justice is desirable for its own sake as well as for its consequences.⁵ It is unexpected because at the end of the enquiry into the just state and soul in Book IV, Socrates and Glaucon appeared to be in full agreement. It is interesting that the four main respondents in the *Republic* all feature in this interruption at the beginning of Book V. This interruption from Adeimantus and the other respondents in Book V, together with the expressions of doubt from Socrates, should not be dismissed by the reader as simply dramatic devices deployed by Plato. Instead, they should be considered along with the arguments being advanced in the dialogue.⁶

² This is in character with Adeimantus who is also abrupt with Socrates at other points in the *Republic* including his comments at 362d-e, Book II, where he commences his display oration.

³ Then at 450b, Thrasymachus asks 'But what do you think we are here for, idle speculation or serious discussion?' This reminds the reader of the comment from Socrates at 336e, Book I, where he observes that finding justice is more valuable than finding gold.

⁴ At this point of the enquiry in *Republic* Book V Glaucon and Adeimantus are acting as capable, sympathetic and challenging respondents, as discussed in the typology of key respondents in the introductory chapter of this study.

⁵ At 419a, Book IV, Adeimantus interrupts Socrates and argues that the guardians would not be happy in the ideal state due to their lack of money and private property.

⁶ Halliwell 1998, pp. 6-7. Halliwell concludes that together these elements give the reader the impression that the arguments being put forward in Book V are somewhat provisional.

This is the first appearance of Polemarchus, and Thrasymachus since Book I.⁷ It reminds the reader that they are still present and following the discussion. It also alerts the reader to the fact that Socrates will need to convince members of society who hold views similar to those of Polemarchus and Thrasymachus of the benefits of the ideal state that he is proposing. Importantly, the fact that the character Adeimantus was prepared to speak up on behalf of the respondents demonstrates that he was not satisfied with Socrates' approach at this stage of the enquiry. The full significance of this interruption becomes clearer as we work through the controversial theories outlined by Socrates in Book V and the remaining Books of the *Republic*.

Socrates responds calmly but hesitantly to the interruption from Adeimantus. This is interesting given the strength of this interruption. Socrates says 'What trouble you're causing by holding me up like this.' 'It's an enormous subject, and you're really starting again from the beginning just as I was congratulating myself on having finished with our state, and was feeling glad that no one had questioned the description I had given' (450a-b). Socrates then agrees, somewhat reluctantly, to proceed with the enquiry into women and children in the guardian and auxiliary classes. Indeed, at 450b Socrates admits that he had been trying to avoid discussion of this subject. The response from Socrates suggests to the reader that if Adeimantus had not interrupted, Socrates would have been prepared to proceed with the enquiry without enquiring further into the issue of women and the family, not to mention the much larger central topics of Books VI and VII concerning the philosopher ruler. Socrates returns to the issue of imperfect societies in Book VIII.

This leads the reader to question what message Plato is trying to give here concerning Socrates and the dialectic enquiry. Importantly, the reader would not expect a fully trained guardian to try to avoid enquiring into an issue of such significance. This reminds the reader that, although Socrates demonstrates a higher level of philosophical understanding than the respondents in the dialectic enquiry, he has not reached the level of understanding of the guardians. Also, Plato appears to be saying something here about his own conception of the difficulty of the topic under consideration. Was he really going to allow Socrates to omit the central thesis?

Although this appears to be a dramatic play, it suggests that Plato may have lacked

⁷ Page (1991, pp. 26-27) notes the importance of this interruption, which was backed by the four respondents at the beginning of Book V, and he suggests that it results in a new start to the dialogue and to the ideal city that they are enquiring into.

confidence in his ability to deal with this area of the enquiry. The lack of confidence displayed by Socrates at this point may be designed to gain the support of the reader before the controversial theories concerning knowledge and the Forms are outlined later in the dialogue. Another point to note is that the guardian rulers are prepared to use deceit in the ideal state, for example in the drawing of lots for mating festivals (460a). The issue of the guardian rulers using deceit is considered later in this chapter.

It is notable how the respondents react to Socrates at this point in the dialogue. When Socrates points out the enormity of the task that is being set for him, Thrasymachus is unsympathetic with him whilst Glaucon gives him encouragement. Thrasymachus says 'But what do you think we are here for? Idle speculation or serious discussion' (450b)?⁸ Glaucon makes a number of encouraging remarks in which he urges Socrates not to give up the enquiry (450b-c) and he assures Socrates that they are a sympathetic audience (450d). In response to Glaucon, Socrates is grateful for the support that he is being given but he continues to display signs of hesitation.

With regard to the difficult nature of the enquiry, Socrates explains that 'when one is doing what I am doing now, and trying to discuss things about which one is far from certain,' he is in danger of coming to false conclusions and leading his friends astray (450d-450e). The responses from Thrasymachus and Glaucon suggest that Glaucon is a more suitable respondent for this stage of the enquiry in the *Republic* because he is less aggressive and more supportive.⁹ Indeed, this has been the case since the introduction of the dialectic method of enquiry at 368a, in Book II, part 2. Interestingly, Glaucon seems more prepared than Adeimantus to join in the dialectic enquiry with Socrates. However, Glaucon is also less critical than Adeimantus is of Socrates. For example, at 449a, Glaucon is asking Socrates for further details concerning imperfect states and souls, whereas, shortly after at 449c, Adeimantus bursts into the discussion and forces Socrates to enquire into the arrangements for women and the family in the

⁸ Thrasymachus appears to be making an important point here. Socrates is trying to avoid discussion of women and the family, which is a vital component of the ideal state. Is Socrates avoiding the subject because it will lead to trouble and is this what Thrasymachus is suggesting?

⁹ Blondell (2002, p. 249) alerts the reader to the suitability of the characters Glaucon and Adeimantus to the dialectic enquiry, as opposed to Thrasymachus. She also notes that Thrasymachus speaks for the last time at the beginning of Book V (450a-b) and she points out some of the advantages of him remaining silent after that point (p. 243). Thrasymachus is referred to later in the *Republic* at 498c-d and 590d.

guardian and auxiliary classes. Nevertheless, Plato's depiction of Thrasymachus at 450b in the dialectic enquiry seems to highlight a weakness in that method of enquiry. It appears to be a serious criticism of the character Socrates for his attempted avoidance of discussion of women and the family in the ideal state and an admission that this is a vital issue for the ideal state.

In response to this, Glaucon gives further encouragement to Socrates and reassures him that if they are led to false conclusions through the enquiry, they will not blame or punish him for this outcome. The response from Glaucon here is particularly supportive and rather amusing 'if we are led into error by this discussion, we'll acquit you of manslaughter, absolve you of fraud, and discharge you without a stain on your character' (451b).¹⁰ Socrates then agrees to proceed with the enquiry. There appears to be something significant going on at this point in the dialogue. The strong expression of support from Glaucon leaves the reader wondering what message Plato is giving here? Is this a reference to Socrates' real imprisonment and death? The reader is left confused as to why Glaucon chose these particular charges and whether to take Glaucon seriously. Also, it is surprising that Adeimantus and the other respondents do not speak up at this stage. Their silence suggests that they are in agreement with Glaucon. However, even the strong encouragement from Glaucon to Socrates leaves the reader unprepared for the theories concerning women and the family that Socrates outlines in Book V.

Significantly, Socrates displayed a similar level of hesitancy at the beginning of the dialectic enquiry in Book II, part 2, 368a-c. At that point, he also received encouragement from the respondents who, led by Glaucon, begged him to proceed with the enquiry into justice. This articulates the structure turning points. In addition, it appears to be designed to encourage the reader to empathise with the character Socrates and the theories that he advances. It also raises the level of importance and urgency of the present enquiry and helps to gain the attention of the reader and audience. However, another outcome is that the reader is left questioning Plato's purpose in portraying Socrates in this negative manner. It also alerts the reader to the revolutionary nature of what is proposed by Socrates and to question these theories

¹⁰ This exchange reminds the reader of the banter between Socrates and Thrasymachus at 337d, Book I, where Thrasymachus asserts that he can give a far better definition of justice and Socrates says that he will have to pay the penalty for his ignorance, that is, to learn from those who have knowledge. Notably, this is followed at 337e, Book I, with Thrasymachus accusing Socrates of never giving his own views.

and this seems to be intentional on the part of Plato.

(Section 2)

The introduction of the female guardian

Following the encouragement received from Glaucon, Socrates quickly regains his confidence and proceeds with the enquiry into the role of women in the guardian class. In Book V, Socrates and the respondents continue to adopt the dialectic method of enquiry which was introduced in Book II, 368a onwards.¹¹ Socrates introduces the controversial thesis that male and female guardians should share the same duties within the state (451e). He refers to this as wave one (457b). Importantly, Glaucon, who acts as respondent at this point of the enquiry agrees to this arrangement. But, Glaucon notes that the females would be treated as the weaker and the males as the stronger guardians (451d-e).

It is surprising that Glaucon gives his agreement so quickly to this controversial theory from Socrates and that the other respondents remain silent. This is despite the high level of input from the respondents at the beginning of Book V. It is also surprising how quickly Socrates regains his confidence in Book V. The low level of resistance displayed by Glaucon after the initial interruption in Book V, leaves the reader puzzled as to why Socrates is portrayed as being so anxious at the beginning of this Book. The comment from Glaucon at 451d-e concerning male guardians being stronger than the female guardians is significant as it is a theme that runs through Book V of the *Republic*.

Sometimes when referring to male and female guardians in *Republic* Book V Socrates refers to male and female watchdogs.¹² The fact that Socrates refers to watchdogs rather than guardians is interesting. It creates a link between the male and female watchdogs that are being considered in Book V, and the men and women in Plato's contemporary society who may have the potential to become guardians in the ideal state. The suggestion that human beings can be trained, like animals, to behave in certain ways, links in closely with the ideal state and soul as outlined in Book IV, which requires a high level of discipline within the three classes. Members of each of

¹¹ The dialectic method of enquiry is considered in chapter 3 of this study.

¹² For a useful summary of the references to animals in *Republic* Book V, see (Halliwell 1998, p. 17).

the three classes are required to play their designated role within the state. In the ideal state, the guardian and auxiliary classes would be educated to act appropriately. The workers would be kept under control by the guardians who would be backed up by the auxiliaries. It also links in with the strict living arrangements for the guardian community as outlined by Socrates later in Book V.

It is in Book II that Socrates first introduces the analogy of the guardian as watchdog (375a). Interestingly, he asserts that the watchdog possesses a philosophic disposition, which is something that the guardians will need to possess. Socrates explains that the watchdog's ability to recognise a friend as opposed to a stranger, that is, the familiar and the unfamiliar, suggests that it has a love of knowledge (376a-b). Although it is a joke, this and the other references to watchdogs can be compared with some other references that Socrates makes to animals in the *Republic*. Examples of these include the reference to the wild beast in relation to Thrasymachus' entry into the discussion at 336b, Book I and the description of the many-headed beast at 588c-e, Book IX. These other references to animals seem to be designed to show the character Thrasymachus in a negative light and the guardians in a positive light. Nevertheless, the reader will also note that in the ideal state characters such as Thrasymachus would have to be controlled by the guardians by force. Perhaps this is one reason why Socrates does not feel the need in the *Republic* to demonstrate conclusively that he has convinced Thrasymachus of the theories concerning the ideal state and soul.

In Book V, Socrates develops his theory further by asserting that the female guardians will receive the same training, both physical and mental, as the male guardians and he gains qualified agreement from Glaucon. Socrates notes that these proposals may 'seem ridiculous if they were put into practice' (452a). This leads to some amusement as they contemplate the female guardians exercising nude with the male guardians (452a-b).¹³ Some have argued that there are connections between *Republic* Book V and Aristophanes' *Ecclesiazusae* and in particular at *Republic* 452c where Socrates refers to the critics and he asserts that they will ask them to be serious

¹³ McDonnell (1991, pp. 182-193), explores the question of when the Greeks began to exercise in the nude. He also considers what source Plato used in the assertion in the *Republic* that it had recently been introduced in Greece (452c-d).

for once.¹⁴ In my view, the most important feature that these two works share is the fact that in order to progress women are required to act like men.

During the course of the enquiry into female guardians, Glaucon responds on behalf of himself and the other respondents. Apart from the occasional request for further clarification, the responses from Glaucon are in agreement with Socrates. These include: 'You are quite right' (452c), 'That is certainly true' (452e), 'True enough' (453d), 'Yes entirely' (454d), and 'No one will deny that' (455c). The silence of Glaucon and the other respondents at this stage of the dialogue continues to worry the reader. The reader is left puzzled as to what Plato's motive is in portraying the respondents in agreement with Socrates for large sections of the dialogue. It appears that the dialectic method of enquiry as advanced from Book II, 368a onwards, requires the respondents to remain silent for long periods of time. However, the active responses from the respondents at key points in the dialogue, including the beginning of Book V, demonstrate that they are playing a key role in the enquiry and that they have an impact on its direction.

As Socrates proceeds with the argument for introducing female guardians, it becomes clear that what he has in mind is female guardians being trained to act as closely as possible to male guardians.¹⁵ In considering whether this thesis is possible or not Socrates asks 'Is the female of the human species naturally capable of taking part in all the occupations of the male, or in none, or in some only' (453a)? He then introduces an imaginary critic and he asks questions on behalf of the critic.¹⁶

The reader is left confused as to why Glaucon and Adeimantus or the other respondents did not ask questions at this point, considering the enthusiasm they displayed at the beginning of Book V, in raising the issue of women and the family. By introducing an imaginary critic, the character Socrates takes control of the questions and the answers, (although, of course, they are all being controlled by Plato). It is

¹⁴ For a useful summary of the similarities and differences between Plato's *Republic* Book V and Aristophanes' *Ecclesiastusae*, see (Halliwell 1998, p. 11 and pp. 224-225). For consideration of the women in the plays of Aristophanes including *Ecclesiastusae* see (Cartledge 2001, pp. 32-42) and (Nails 2002, pp. 55-56).

¹⁵ Halliwell (1998, p. 8) points out that these arrangements are for the benefit of the state as opposed to the individual male or female guardian. Annas (1999, pp. 265-279) argues that Plato is not a feminist.

¹⁶ The introduction of the imaginary critic is a literary device used by Socrates quite often in the *Republic* and in other dialogues.

worth observing that the argument put forward by the imaginary critic at 453b is quite strong and convincing. Indeed, some have argued that the imaginary critic has a strong impact on the enquiry.¹⁷ I think this is an exaggeration, but it leaves the reader confused as to whether the view of Socrates, the imaginary critic, or neither of these, is representative of Plato's view at this stage of the dialogue.

At 453b, Book V, the imaginary critic alerts the reader to the importance of the notion of specialisation of labour that they agreed to in the dialectic enquiry into the just state and just soul in Book IV. Socrates asserts that the imaginary critic would argue that the natural differences between men and women would make it appropriate for them to play different roles in the ideal city. Following this, Socrates expresses doubt again in his ability to proceed with the enquiry and he is given encouragement by Glaucon to continue (453c-e). As the enquiry with the imaginary critic proceeds in Book V, Socrates makes an interesting comment concerning the method of enquiry that they are adopting. He observes 'You know, Glaucon, it's extraordinary how powerful the influence of debating technique can be' (454a). He then asserts that, in discussion, some people focus their attention on scoring points rather than arguing seriously and he suggests, as Adeimantus asserts at 487b, Book VI, that this may be happening to them as they proceed with the enquiry.

This reminds the reader of the input from Thrasymachus in Book I, where he interrupts the elenchus enquiry between Socrates and Polemarchus (336b) and advances the thesis that injustice is superior to justice. It also reminds the reader of the display oration method as adopted by Glaucon and Adeimantus, in Book II, part 1, where they challenge Socrates to demonstrate that justice is good for its own sake as well as its consequences (357a-367e). Unlike the dialectic method of enquiry, the elenchus enquiry in Book I and the display oration method of enquiry in Book II, part 1, did not result in a positive thesis being put forward concerning justice.

Socrates suggests that, as a way forward, they should consider the similarities and differences in nature between the male and female. This is in order to establish whether females would have the capacity to become guardians (454b). Glaucon gives his agreement to this approach on behalf of himself and Adeimantus. Socrates sets out to establish that there is no administrative function that is peculiar to the male

¹⁷ Blondell 2002, p. 210.

or female (455d). He asserts that there are some among the female sex who possess the characteristics that make them suitable to become guardians. These include: being athletic and having the capacity to become a good soldier and also being spirited. Importantly, some women have the ability to be philosophic (455e-456a). This leads Socrates to conclude 'Then there will also be some women fitted to be guardians: for these natural qualities, you will remember, were those for which we picked our men guardians' (456a). Notably, with regard to the possibility of introducing female guardians, Socrates is being theoretical. Unfortunately, there are no female examples from their contemporary society for them to identify with in the enquiry. Surprisingly, Glaucon gives his agreement to this without any further questioning.

Significantly, in order to become guardians, women must display the characteristics of the male guardian. As a result of this, the administration of the ideal state will in effect be dominated by male values and goals. In order for the ideal state to function as outlined in *Republic* Book IV, it will be necessary for female guardians to become, in effect, male guardians. This issue is explored further in the next section of this chapter, where it becomes apparent that the female guardians are introduced primarily in order to provide the next generation of guardians. Like all other members of the ideal state, the female guardians are required to act in the interest of the state overall, rather than any individual interests that they may have.

The theories advanced by Socrates in Book V seem too far removed from the roles of both the male and female in Plato's contemporary society. Also, in the ideal state, new opportunities were only being opened up to guardian women who would represent a small percentage of the female population overall. There seems to be a paradox in the role of the female guardian in the ideal state. Women guardians would have to be like male guardians, but their female role would be vital if the state as outlined by Socrates was to have a chance of survival. Some have argued that the theories advanced by Socrates and the respondents in Book V are not designed to treat guardian women any worse than guardian men.¹⁸ I would argue that Socrates has proposed that the family be destroyed in order to allow the ideal state to come into existence and that therefore the guardian female role is surely only a means to an end.

¹⁸ Annas (1976, pp. 307-321) asserts that Socrates is interested primarily in the good of the state overall, rather than equality issues between male and female guardians or the individual interests of the male guardians.

Others have asserted that the theories in Book V demonstrate a recognition of the ability and potential of women.¹⁹ Others have noted the importance of Book V for its evaluation of men and women alike, based on their ability to use their reason.²⁰ It is significant that the question of women and the family in the guardian and auxiliary classes does not really feature in the rest of the enquiry in the *Republic* after Book V.

Socrates asserts that the introduction of female guardians would be possible and that it would be the best arrangement for the ideal state. Female guardians will be given the same education that is required to make a man into a guardian (456c). The male guardians will be the best men in the state and similarly the female guardians will be the best females in the state (456d-e). Socrates concludes that the female guardians should engage in all the duties of the male guardians, including taking part in war and administrative duties within the state (457a-b).²¹ It is surprising that there is no opposition expressed by the respondents or by the imaginary critic to the proposal to introduce female guardians.²² Indeed, the imaginary critic has gone quiet all of a sudden. Perhaps, Plato intends the readers to be concerned about the lack of response at this point in the dialogue and to act as critic for themselves. Maybe, the fact that the female guardians would be required to display the characteristics of the male guardians, makes it more acceptable to the respondents for females to be introduced into the guardian community.

As Socrates and the respondents have agreed (451e and 455d) that in general terms the female guardian will be weaker than the male guardian, this could result in some unexpected outcomes for the ideal state. There are a number of issues that could have been raised by Glaucon, Adeimantus and the other respondents or indeed by the imaginary critic. One possibility is that a higher proportion of females would reach the rank of auxiliary rather than philosopher. This would result in an army

¹⁹ Vlastos (1997, pp. 115-128) observes that although the theories advanced in Book V are concerned with the good of the state overall, they also demonstrate that in the plans for female guardians in the ideal state, Plato was not influenced by the subordinate role they played in his contemporary society. For further consideration of feminist issues relating to Plato, see Tuana (1994, pp. 25-130).

²⁰ Levin 1996, p. 26.

²¹ Levin (2000, pp. 81-97) considers the arrangements for women in the *Laws*, which are less favourable than what is proposed in the *Republic*. This alerts the reader to the fact that the views put forward in the dialogues of Plato may have changed over time.

²² For an appreciation of the subservient role women actually played in fourth century Athens, see (Whitehead 1986, pp. 109-114). This alerts the reader to the controversial nature of the theories advanced by Socrates in *Republic* Book V. See also (Pomeroy 1994, pp. 79-92) for a useful account of the role of women in Classical Athens.

which lacked the physical strength of enemy armies. Another possibility is that there would be fewer females than males in the philosopher class and that the majority of those in charge of that class would be male. In my view this could result in three classes within the guardian and auxiliary community: a) Male and female auxiliaries. b) Female guardians and the male guardians who do not succeed to the rank of guardian ruler. c) Male guardian rulers.

The education of the philosopher begins with a shared programme with the auxiliaries and then progresses to the study of the Forms. The ultimate goal of the philosopher is to gain knowledge of the Form of the Good.²³ However, it is likely that the majority of female guardians would not be in a position to gain knowledge of the Form of the Good and as a result of this they would fail to reach their full potential as guardians.²⁴ Socrates acknowledges that the female guardians will be the weaker sex and he asserts that they will be given a lighter share of the guardian duties than the male guardians (457a). This is likely to result in the female guardians feeling inferior to their male counterparts. In addition to there being fewer female philosophers, pressure would be put on the top female guardians to procreate. This would take them away from their administrative role within the city for periods of time, leaving even fewer women active administratively within the guardian class.

Another point that Glaucon and Adeimantus could have raised is that no females feature in the dialogue the *Republic*. This leads the reader to question how females can aspire to become guardians, if they are excluded from philosophical enquiry. The dramatic scene of the *Republic* purports to reflect real life in the 420's. Therefore, no women would have been permitted to attend. In the *Phaedo*, which is depicted earlier, the women are removed before Socrates talks to his friends. In addition to this, the one woman who is referred to in the course of the main philosophical enquiry in the dialogues of Plato is not treated in the same way as the men. Diotima in the *Symposium*, who is referred to by Socrates as a female prophetess, is wiser than

²³ Cooke (1999, pp. 37-44) provides a useful account of the educational development of the guardians, including the shared stage with the auxiliaries.

²⁴ Buchan (1999, p. 142) goes further than this. She asserts that the male guardian's soul would be superior to the female guardian's soul and that this would prevent the female guardians from reaching their full potential. According to Buchan 'It is the masculine soul, the superior sort, which falls in earthly existence into the body of a male. The inferior sort which have seen less of the celestial vision, (that is the Forms) the less philosophical or non-philosophical souls, are those which end up in the body of a woman. For a critical analysis of Buchan's views concerning Plato's arrangements for women, see (Brown 2002, pp. 189-193).

Socrates and she possesses knowledge of the Forms, like a female guardian. It would have been interesting if Plato had included a female character like Diotima in the *Republic*, to give the reader and audience a picture of what a female guardian might be like.²⁵ Some may argue that it does not matter to the ideal city as a whole whether the majority of guardians and guardian rulers are male, as long as they maintain justice within the city. However, the stability of the city overall depends on the guardian and auxiliary classes remaining stable.²⁶ It is likely that the female guardians would become dissatisfied with their role within the ideal state in the long-term and would be unwilling to co-operate.

(Section 3)

The guardian community

Having concluded that it would be in the best interest of the state for female guardians to take on the same duties as male guardians, Socrates and the respondents consider what the appropriate living arrangements would be for the guardian class. Socrates observes that they have survived the first wave without drowning and he alerts the reader and audience to the fact that the theory he is about to put forward is much more controversial. He refers to this as the second and bigger wave (457c).²⁷ Socrates asserts that 'men and women guardians should be forbidden by law to live together in separate households, and all the women should be common to all the men; similarly, children should be held in common, and no parent should know its child, or child its parent' (457c-d). In response to this, Glaucon notes that this is a much bigger wave. It is likely to lead to a sceptical reaction from the community about the possibility of introducing this and whether it would be to the advantage of the community (457d).

At this point, rather than expanding on this theory with confidence, Socrates demonstrates uncertainty about his ability to proceed with the enquiry. He admits that

²⁵ Reeve (2001) provides a useful set of dialogues on themes from Plato's *Republic*, which feature women in philosophical discussion with Plato and Aristotle.

²⁶ The long-term stability of the ideal state and soul is considered in detail by Socrates and the respondents in *Republic* Books VIII and IX. This issue is discussed in chapter 3, section 3a, of this study.

²⁷ At 473c-e, Book V, Socrates introduces the third and biggest wave of the *Republic*. This is considered in the next chapter of this enquiry. For a useful account of the three waves in the *Republic*, see (Roochnik 2003, pp. 57-69). Sedley (2007, pp. 256-283) alerts the reader to the cumulative nature of the three waves with the third wave threatening to cause a 'philosophical tsunami, a veritable cataclysm of incredulity that threatens to wash away' the entire political agenda as advanced by Socrates (p. 256).

he had hoped that he had already convinced the respondents of the advantages of introducing these arrangements for women and the family and that in the enquiry they could focus on whether it would be possible or not (457e). In response to this, Glaucon observes that Socrates has not been successful in convincing them of either of these points and that Socrates should be 'charged on both counts' (457e), that is, beneficial and viable. This is an unexpectedly firm response from Glaucon. It demonstrates that he is following the arguments carefully and ensuring that Socrates provides more detail on some issues that need to be considered further. Importantly, at the beginning of Book V Socrates admitted that he had hoped to avoid discussing the issue of women and the family (450a-451b). Up to this point, Glaucon had been portrayed as being sympathetic with Socrates and had encouraged him to embark on this enquiry. In this later example at (457c-d), Glaucon appears to be justified in seeking further explanation from Socrates. This is because Socrates has provided insufficient detail concerning the advantages or possibility of introducing the theories outlined with respect to women and the family.

What is Plato's purpose in portraying Socrates in this manner? Is Plato trying to avoid going into detail about controversial matters? It would appear that the hesitancy displayed by Socrates is designed to alert the reader and audience to the enormity of the task facing Socrates and the respondents in enquiring into the subject of women and the family. Perhaps it is designed to encourage the reader to be sympathetic towards the character Socrates as well as the theories that he is putting forward. It may also indicate Plato's hesitancy in introducing the theory concerning women and the family. However, the critical response from Glaucon encourages the readers to think through the issues for themselves and consider the implications of what is being agreed. As Socrates provides further details concerning the arrangements for women and the family in Book V, the reader becomes aware of the gap that is developing between the theory of the tripartite state as outlined in Book IV and the practical implications concerning its introduction.

In response to Glaucon, Socrates makes a surprising comment. He says 'I must stand my trial, then' (457e). Socrates then expresses further feelings of doubt. He explains that he is 'not feeling very strong' and he asks if he can put off consideration of the practicalities of the theory concerning women and the family at this stage

(458b).²⁸ For now, he wants to concentrate on how the guardians would put these arrangements into practice in the ideal state. Also, on how these arrangements would benefit the state as a whole (458b). Later in Book V, Socrates shows further signs of hesitation when he asserts that they are looking for an ideal pattern rather than trying to demonstrate that the ideal city could actually exist (472c-d).²⁹ The lack of confidence in his ability displayed by Socrates as the enquiry proceeds in Book V, can be compared with the confidence displayed by the character Socrates at the end of Book IV having outlined the theory of justice in the state and soul. The expressions of uncertainty from Socrates are becoming a regular feature of the *Republic* and they are beginning to undermine the reader's confidence in the theories that Socrates is putting forward. This appears to be intentional on the part of Plato.

Interestingly, and despite the firmness he displayed at (457e), Glaucon gives in easily to Socrates and grants him his request to put off consideration of the practical issues (458b). Indeed, during the remainder of the enquiry into the living arrangements of the guardian community, the responses from Glaucon are in agreement with Socrates with the occasional request for further clarification. Examples of the responses from Glaucon include: 'A reasonable supposition' (458c), 'That will certainly be necessary' (460a), 'I quite agree' (461e), 'That is very true' (462c), and 'Yes, we said that' (464c). The silence of the respondents continues to be a worry for the reader at this stage.³⁰ This is also raised as a cause for concern in chapters 3 and 5 of this enquiry.³¹ Indeed, in these examples, Plato appears to be encouraging the reader to take over the role of the respondent in these parts of the dialogue.

Socrates and the respondents proceed to consider how the guardians would implement the arrangements for women and the family. They agree that the male and female guardians would live, train and exercise together as a group and that they

²⁸ Interestingly, in the *Republic*, Socrates does not return to the issue of the practicalities of the theory of women and the family. The significance of Socrates' avoidance of this issue is considered in section 4 of this chapter.

²⁹ This passage appears to prefigure the discussion between Socrates and Glaucon at the end of Book IX, where they express doubt about the possibility of the ideal state ever existing in reality and Socrates concludes that 'it is laid up as a pattern in heaven, where he who wishes can see it and found it in his own heart' (592a-b).

³⁰ At this point in the dialogue, Glaucon and Adeimantus fit into the last category of respondents as discussed in the introductory chapter of this study, that is, capable, sympathetic respondents who remain silent for extended periods of time.

³¹ Blondell (2002, pp. 249-250) suggests that the lack of resistance from Glaucon and Adeimantus in the dialectic enquiry encourages the reader and audience to question the theories that Socrates is advancing and to think for themselves.

would not be permitted to own private property (458c-d). There would be no traditional marriage between guardians. Instead, mating festivals would be held so that the next generation of guardians could be bred. Socrates once again introduces an analogy with animals. He considers the arrangements for breeding hunting dogs and game birds and notes that the best dogs and birds are bred by those in their prime (459b). He observes that the same applies to horses and other animals. Socrates then asserts that the same approach should be taken in order to produce the best guardians.

Socrates then reintroduces a controversial element into the discussion. He asserts that the ruling guardians would need to deceive the male and female guardians in the arrangements relating to their mating.³² He argues that 'our rulers will have to employ a great deal of fiction and deceit for the benefit of their subjects; and you will remember that we agreed that they might be used as a kind of medicine' (459c-d). Here Socrates is referring back to Book II, 382b-d and Book III, 389b where, in relation to the education of the guardians, Socrates and the respondents agreed that the ruling guardians would need to use falsehood as a form of medicine, for the good of the state overall. In Book V, Socrates and the respondents proceed with the enquiry and agree that in order to produce the next generation of guardians, the best males will need to mate with the best females. In order for this to be achieved, Socrates asserts that the ruling guardians will need to arrange mating festivals for the males and females to come together to breed (459e). This will be done through a system of drawing lots. To ensure that the best males and females mate with each other, the ruling guardians will need to 'devise an ingenious system of drawing lots, so that our inferior guardians can, at each mating festival, blame the lot and not the rulers' (460a).

At this point in the enquiry, the reader is left with some concerns with regard to the feasibility of the ideal state. The reader would not expect to find the rulers of the ideally just state using deceit, even if it is deemed to be in the interest of the state overall. In the ideally just state as outlined by Socrates, there is no system in place to monitor the rulers. This could lead to the deterioration of the ideal state in the long-term, with the rulers taking advantage of their situation and employing deceit for their personal gain, rather than for the good of the state overall. In Books VIII and IX of the

³² For consideration of the exploitation of the sexual desires of the guardians see (Halliwell 1998, p. 8).

Republic, Socrates and the respondents consider how the ideal state and soul could deteriorate. Interestingly, in their enquiry into imperfect states and souls, Socrates and the respondents do not consider the use of deceit by the rulers, as a factor that could lead to the deterioration of the ideal state.

Another concern in relation to the drawing of lots is that it presumes that the rulers will be able to judge which guardians should be picked for the purpose of producing the best offspring. There is no guarantee that their calculations will be correct or that the offspring of the best guardians will have the good attributes of their parents. Indeed, it is likely that the guardians will rely more on their military and political ability than the drawing of lots for mating festivals, for the survival of the ideal state.³³ Notably, Socrates observes in Book VIII that the rulers may fail in their calculations with regard to the breeding of guardians. According to Socrates 'reason and observation will not always enable them to hit on the right and wrong times for breeding; some time they will miss them and then children will be begotten amiss' (546b). We are told that this is how the deterioration of the ideal state could begin, with it changing initially from an ideal state to a timarchy (546c-547c).

There is also a presumption that the inferior guardians will fail to notice their lack of luck in the lots. This seems unlikely given the high standard of education that the guardians and auxiliaries will receive in the ideal state. Socrates asserts that male guardians who distinguish themselves at war will be given more frequent opportunities to sleep with women in the mating festivals (460b). In my view, it is unlikely that the other guardians will fail to notice this arrangement either. This could lead to frustration and discontent within the guardian class. It could also lead to a lack of trust among the guardian community in the guardian rulers. This could have a destabilising impact on the ideal state. In their consideration of imperfect states and souls, Socrates and the respondents do not consider this as a potential threat to the long-term stability of the state.³⁴

The continued silence of the respondents at this point in the enquiry, following their dramatic interruption at the beginning of Book V, leads the reader to question Plato's motive in portraying Glaucon and Adeimantus in this manner. Plato may be alerting

³³ Halliwell 1998, p.18.

³⁴ Significantly, early in Book VIII, Socrates observes that 'as long as the ruling class remains united, even if it is quite small, no change is possible' (545d).

the reader to a weakness in the dialectic method of enquiry.³⁵ Although this method of enquiry enables Socrates and the respondents to advance positive theories concerning justice in the city and the soul, the theories put forward in the enquiry appear to lack feasibility in the short and long-term. This raises a question as to whether Plato intended the reader to accept these theories.

Socrates does not say, but presumably female guardians who distinguish themselves at war would be entitled to the same reward as their male counterparts. This could have a potentially negative impact on the state. It would result in the best female warriors being kept away from the battlefields for periods of time on a regular basis, due to pregnancy. In addition to this, it would put their long-term health at risk, due to the possible medical complications associated with pregnancy and childbirth. It is unclear in Book V how regularly the mating festivals between male and female guardians would be held. If they were held on a regular basis, some of the best female guardians would not be able to take part as they would be pregnant.³⁶ Some have asserted that in Book V it is not being argued that female guardians should be given the same reward as male guardians for doing well in battle. Also, that the female guardians would be placed in a subordinate role sexually to the male guardians in the ideal state.³⁷ In relation to this, it is likely that the proposals outlined by Socrates concerning female guardians would have gained a negative response from the Athenians of Plato's day, both male and female, as they differed significantly from contemporary practices.³⁸ This may explain why the point was not raised by Socrates concerning sexual rewards for the female guardians. It also raises a question as to the seriousness of Plato's intention at this point in the enquiry.

Socrates and the respondents proceed to consider the arrangements for guardian children. Socrates proposes and the respondents agree that following their birth, guardian children will be taken to state nurseries where they will be taken care of. The nursery workers will come from outside the guardian community (460b-c). The only involvement that the guardian mothers would have with the guardian infants would be

³⁵ Notably, the elenchus enquiry in *Republic* Book I alerted the reader to some weaknesses in the characters Cephalus, Polemarchus and Thrasymachus and also to a weakness in the elenchus method, i.e. that it did not provide an answer to the question under consideration.

³⁶ Reeve 1997, p. 140.

³⁷ Buchan 1999, pp. 147-148.

³⁸ Halliwell (1998, p. 9) provides a summary of the differences between the proposals outlined by Socrates in the *Republic* Book V for female guardians and the practices that existed in contemporary Athens.

to share in the breast-feeding of them. The guardian fathers would have no involvement in the rearing of their children. The officials running the nurseries would make every effort to ensure that the female guardians would not recognise their own children (460d). With regard to these arrangements, Glaucon observes that 'Child-bearing will be an easy job for the guardians' wives on those conditions' and Socrates agrees with him (460d).

It is important to note the reference to duty in this process. The female guardians are required to breed in the interest of the state, rather than for their own personal benefit. Similarly, the male guardians play their prescribed role in the breeding process for the benefit of the state. The aim of this exercise is to produce the next generation of guardians, which will consist of male and female guardians both acting like males.³⁹ In this arrangement, the female guardians would be playing their required role within the tripartite state, as outlined in *Republic* Book IV. This helps the reader and audience to understand why Socrates put so much emphasis on the importance of each person keeping to their prescribed role within the ideal state.⁴⁰ Notably, some guardian children will not be accepted into the guardian nursery, but taken elsewhere. These would include infants of inferior parents and also defective infants (460c). This is another example of the level of power that the ruling guardians would have over the guardian class as a whole, but it would be necessary to keep the guardian community intact.

Once they have agreed on the establishment of a state nursery for guardian children, Socrates and the respondents consider and agree that the guardians should breed in their prime. Socrates asserts that female guardians would be in their prime for twenty years and male guardians for thirty years (460e) and they agree on the precise age when each sex would be in its prime. The reader and audience are again reminded of the level of control that the rulers will maintain over the guardian class. Socrates asserts that it will be a crime for guardians who are not in their prime to conceive (461a). It would also be a crime for guardians who are in their prime to mate outside the mating festivals (461b), which are controlled by the ruling guardians. A point that could have been raised by Glaucon is that the female guardians would be in their

³⁹ Price 1997, p. 170.

⁴⁰ Page (1991, pp. 28-29) alerts the reader to the strength of parental ties and how this could cause a conflict of loyalty for the guardians, between the family and the state, if the family was not abolished.

prime for ten years less than the male guardians. Hence there would need to be more female than male guardians in the ideal state. This would be to ensure that there were sufficient female guardians for the mating festivals.

In the ideal state, the rulers would also use their power to regulate mating between guardians who are past their prime. This would include disposing of any children born as a result of these unions (461c). Socrates states and Glaucon agrees that it will be necessary to prevent guardians mating with their own children and grandchildren at mating festivals and when they are past their prime. In order to ensure this, Socrates asserts that 'a man will call all males born in the tenth or the seventh month after he has been a bride-groom sons and all the females daughters, and they will call him father; similarly, he will call their children grandchildren, and they will in turn call his marriage-group grandfathers and grandmothers' (461d). In addition, Socrates asserts that 'all who are born during the period when their mothers and fathers were producing children will call each other brothers and sisters' (461d-e). This would require the guardian rulers to keep complex records of each of the mating festivals and the children born as a result of them.

Over a number of generations of guardians it could become more difficult for the rulers to keep track of which guardians are potentially the parents and grandparents of which children. Importantly, the fact that the lots for the mating festivals would be rigged in favour of the best male and female guardians could have an impact here. It would put additional pressure on this group of guardians to attend mating festivals and breed regularly. This would result in the best female guardians being pregnant on a regular basis. Therefore, it may become necessary for the best male guardians to breed with some of the inferior female guardians.

An important issue that could have been raised here by Glaucon and Adeimantus, and where the reader feels the need to take on the role of the respondent, is the negative personal impact that the proposed arrangements could have on both the male and female guardians. Their education and training would prepare them mentally and physically for the life they would lead as members of the guardian community. However, it is questionable as to whether this would prepare them fully for the guardian way of life. Although the guardians would be part of an extended

community, it is likely that they would feel somewhat isolated, without the support of close family ties. It is possible that there would be competition between guardians to distinguish themselves at war and to be seen to be the best of their class. The suppression of female qualities within the guardian class could have a negative impact emotionally on the female guardians. The separation of female guardians from their children would be likely to cause them upset and pain.⁴¹

Now that they have reached agreement on the arrangements for the establishment and survival of the guardian class in the ideal state, Socrates and the respondents consider some wider benefits of the living arrangements of that class. Socrates argues that, unlike traditional rulers, the guardians will live cohesively within their community. Their lack of private property and close family ties will make the guardians less preoccupied with individual concerns (464c-d).⁴² This will enable them to focus their attention on their work. Guardians will consider their fellow guardians as part of an extended family of guardians. They will not compete with each other for money and possessions. Socrates asserts that in the ideal state the three classes will call each other fellow-citizens, rather than master and slave. In addition to this, the workers in the ideal state will call members of the other two classes their protectors and defenders. The guardians and auxiliaries will respect the workers for providing them with their food and other necessities (463a-b). According to Socrates, the community of women and children is a key element in the unity of the guardian class (464a) and the state as a whole. In my view, as discussed in this section, there are important weaknesses associated with the arrangements for women and the family in the guardian community. It is likely that these weaknesses would lead to the collapse of the ideal state in the long term.

Importantly, Socrates notes that in order to maintain discipline within the guardian class, the older members will have the power to discipline the younger members (465a). This reminds the reader of the level of control that the guardian rulers would maintain over their class as a whole. Socrates then asserts that because they are not fighting among themselves, the guardian class will live in peace with one another. This will enable them to live at peace with the other classes within the community as well

⁴¹ For a useful discussion of the treatment of women in the ideal state and the difficulties that they may experience see (Reeve 1997, pp. 129-141).

⁴² Price (1997, p. 189) observes that over time the terms such as father and son that were introduced into the guardian community from the established community would lose their original force.

(465b). Socrates asserts that the guardians will lead 'a far more blissful life than any Olympic victor' (465d). It is worth observing that Socrates is putting forward a rather idealistic picture here. It shares some of the attributes of the basic community as outlined by Socrates in *Republic* Book II, part 2, where we are told that the people would live in peace and harmony with one another. However, that earlier model was rejected by Glaucon because it was too basic (369c -372d).

Socrates reminds the reader that in the enquiry into justice they are seeking to establish the happiness of the city overall, rather than the happiness of a particular class.⁴³ He asserts however, that the guardians will lead very happy lives within the ideal state, despite their lack of property and close family ties (465e-466c). Glaucon gives his agreement to this on behalf of himself and Adeimantus. It is surprising that Glaucon does not seek any further clarification from Socrates concerning this point. This appears to be a weakness in the dialectical method. As observed above, there are a number of issues relating to the proposed living arrangements for the guardian community that may lead to competition and dissatisfaction among the guardian class. This may result in some guardians being happier than others within the ideal state. The better and more talented guardians who receive the rewards for their talents, are likely to be happier than the less talented members of their class. It is likely that the male guardians will be happier than the female guardians as they are more likely to rise to high positions within their community.⁴⁴

Another concern is that, in the long term, the guardian rulers may find it more difficult than expected to regulate and control the working class within the city, who will make up the majority of the population. In addition to this, the auxiliaries may become dissatisfied with their role in the city, having to make the sacrifices of the guardians but not gaining the same rewards. In chapter 5 of this enquiry, consideration is given to some possible tensions that the guardians may experience between their desire to contemplate the Forms and their duty to the city. It is worth pointing out that, in the

⁴³ At the beginning of *Republic* Book IV Adeimantus expresses concern that the Guardians would not be happy in the ideal state (419a). This comment from Adeimantus alerts the reader to his philosophical ability, as it is central to the arguments outlined in Book V and the later Books of the *Republic*.

⁴⁴ Crossman (1963, p. 122) asserts that the abolition of marriage would be in the interest of women as it would give them the same status as men. But, in my view, the image of the guardian as put forward by Socrates in the *Republic*, is too closely associated with the male in Plato's contemporary Athens. Annas (1976, pp. 320-321) disagrees with Crossman and she asserts that Plato's primary concern in the *Republic* is the establishment of the ideal state.

future, the guardians may be able to overcome some of these issues as their knowledge of the Forms increases.

(Section 4)

Wider Issues concerning the Interruption from Adeimantus at the beginning of Book V and in particular how it relates to the *Republic* overall

Adeimantus' interruption at the beginning of Book V appears to be well founded. It seems uncharacteristic for Socrates to make a very brief reference to such an important issue in relation to the ideal state, when he has been prepared to go into such detailed considerations of other aspects of the state. Examples of these include, the education of the guardians, the censorship of poetry, and justice in the state and the individual. It also raises a question as to why prior to this interruption, where Socrates is putting forward other controversial theories, he is not interrupted by the respondents. Examples of these include, the enquiry into the education of the guardians in Books II and III, especially, the censorship of poetry.⁴⁵ Also, the enquiry into the just state and soul in book IV. Should this lead the reader to conclude that Plato wanted to highlight the issue of women and the family in the *Republic*? The theories in Book V appear to be designed to provide further explanation and to justify the theories that are outlined in the earlier Books and in particular Book IV concerning the just state and soul.

In his interruption at the beginning of Book V, Adeimantus may not only be picking up on Socrates' lack of detail concerning women and the family in the guardian and auxiliary classes. He may also be expressing a note of caution concerning the dialectic method and the controversial theories that are resulting from it. In particular, he may be bringing to the reader's attention the level of control that would need to be maintained over the individual and state as outlined in Book IV. In Book VI of the *Republic*, Socrates puts forward further controversial theories concerning the role of the philosopher within society, which he refers to as wave three. Consideration of this is included in the next chapter of this study. The interruption at the beginning of Book V may also be a warning that the dialectic method of enquiry cannot be rushed, as it requires that the issues raised be investigated thoroughly. Importantly, the issue of control is proving to be central to the dialectic enquiry itself, with Socrates and the

⁴⁵ For detailed consideration of Plato on poetry, see (Murray 2008) and (Gill 1993, pp. 42-51).

respondents playing their role and Socrates maintaining control of the discussion overall. Notably, in the dialectic method of enquiry, the respondents act in a more controlled manner than Thrasymachus in the elenchus method in Book I.

This alerts the reader to a difference between the elenchus and dialectic methods of enquiry. In the elenchus method, as displayed in *Republic* Book I, Thrasymachus interrupts Socrates continually as Socrates engages with him in the enquiry. In the elenchus exchange between Socrates and Thrasymachus, they fail to establish what justice consists in. Importantly, Thrasymachus' lack of patience was a strong contributing factor to this failure.⁴⁶ However, in the dialectic enquiry from Book II, 368a onwards, Glaucon and Adeimantus interrupt less frequently. This gives Socrates the time required to provide an outline of and build upon the theories in the *Republic*. In addition, the interruptions from Glaucon and Adeimantus in the dialectic enquiry are constructive rather than destructive. They challenge Socrates but they also enable him to proceed with the enquiry. Nevertheless, the reader could argue that Socrates is given too much scope to develop the theories that he puts forward through the dialectic method of enquiry in Book V and that this may be a weakness of the dialectic method. But, it is also worth observing that Socrates has studied philosophy all his life and Glaucon and Adeimantus (or indeed the reader) cannot be expected to reach his level of understanding during the course of one dialogue.⁴⁷

An important advantage of the dialectic method of enquiry as displayed in *Republic* Book V is that it will lead to more and more informed theories emerging in the discussion between Socrates and the respondents, over time. Perhaps, the *Republic* represents the start of the dialectic enquiry into justice rather than the final theory from Plato. The reader can appreciate that, once the guardians gain knowledge of the Forms, they may be able to overcome the difficulties that the character Socrates and the respondents experience in formulating theories in the enquiry. This may help to explain the lack of confidence displayed by Socrates at points in the dialogue. It may also explain why the reader may not agree with the theories concerning women and the family as outlined by Socrates in Book V, as they may be provisional at this stage. The theories put forward by Socrates in the *Republic* are likely to be enhanced by the guardians as their knowledge deepens. However, as this is in the

⁴⁶ There are other reasons for the failure of the elenchus exchanges in Book I. These are considered in chapter 1 of this enquiry.

⁴⁷ Blondell 2002, p. 248.

future, it does not address any of the present doubts that the reader has about the theories outlined in the *Republic*.

An interesting similarity between the elenchus and dialectic methods of enquiry is that in both of these Socrates demonstrates uncertainty and a lack of resolve, but in different ways. Notably, in Book I, Cephalus, Polemarchus and Thrasymachus were all confident about the theories that they gave. It was Socrates who admitted at the end of Book I that he still did not know what justice was (354b). However, there is a change in the dialectic method in *Republic* where in addition to Socrates, the respondents Glaucon and Adeimantus also demonstrate uncertainty at points in the enquiry. Another similarity between the elenchus and dialectic methods of enquiry in the *Republic* is the fact that Plato does not feature in person. The reader can appreciate that this works to Plato's advantage in *Republic* Book V as it enables him to advance controversial theories without necessarily endorsing them.⁴⁸

In *Republic* Book IV Socrates displayed reluctance by providing an outline of the big picture, that is, the ideal state first before putting forward the ideal soul. In Book V, Socrates continues to show hesitancy when he refers to wave one, that women could become guardians, and wave two, the abolition of the family in the guardian and auxiliary classes. With regard to the guardian community, Socrates is reluctant to enquire into the practicalities concerning the theories that he is advancing. Instead, he seeks permission to concentrate on how the arrangements would be put into practice in the ideal state and Glaucon grants him his request. These examples of hesitation and uncertainty as demonstrated by Socrates during the course of the dialectic enquiry leave the reader confused as to what Plato's intention was in portraying Socrates in this manner.

Socrates' response to Adeimantus' interruption is also interesting. Socrates does not restart the enquiry into imperfect states and souls until much later in Books VIII and IX of the *Republic*.⁴⁹ Significantly, at 502d, Book VI, Socrates admits that he did not gain anything by trying to put off a detailed consideration of women and the family in the guardian and auxiliary classes. In this example, the respondents have required

⁴⁸ Frede 1992, p. 219.

⁴⁹ Notably, it is Glaucon rather than Socrates who returns to this issue at the beginning of Book VIII, 543a-544b, where he requests that Socrates provide more detail concerning the deterioration of the ideal state and soul, which is then covered in Books VIII and IX of the *Republic*.

Socrates to pause, consider in more depth, and to reflect upon the philosophical theories that he is putting forward and also the dialectic method of enquiry that he is adopting. As noted above, when this interruption occurs Socrates had just been congratulating himself that he had finished the enquiry into the ideal state and individual and that no questions had been raised by the respondents (450a-b).

As Socrates and the respondents attempt to put the theories outlined in Book IV into practice, it becomes apparent that they may work better in theory than in reality.⁵⁰ In Book V, Socrates alerts the reader and audience to the fact that the theory of justice in the state and soul as outlined in Book IV, would require substantial changes within the community and in particular the guardian and auxiliary classes. Rather than looking into the current needs of the community and finding a theory of justice that fits in with these, Socrates formulates the theory of justice in the state and the soul and then considers the changes that would be required within society as a whole to implement the theory. It would appear that the theory advanced by Socrates concerning women and the family in the guardian and auxiliary classes is simply too far removed from the natural arrangements for the family.⁵¹ The interruption from Adeimantus at the beginning of Book V was important in bringing this problem to light. Indeed, it is beginning to become clear that the strength of the arguments put forward by Thrasymachus in Book I and Glaucon and Adeimantus in Book II, part 1, concerning justice and injustice is that the reader can recognise the practicable nature of these theories as opposed to the theories outlined by Socrates in the *Republic* Books IV and V.⁵²

Socrates and the respondents have covered a wide range of issues during the course of the enquiry so far in the *Republic*. The reader can begin to appreciate the connections that are emerging between the radical theories advanced in Book V and the theories outlined in the other Books of the *Republic*. Connections are also coming to light between the characters of Socrates and the respondents and the method of enquiry being adopted. Perhaps, Plato's intention in putting forward such radical proposals for women and the family in Book V was to demonstrate that drastic

⁵⁰ Importantly, this outcome is noted by Socrates and Glaucon at the end of Book IX, 592a-b.

⁵¹ Saxonhouse (1997, pp. 95-113) doubts whether the proposals for the male and female guardians in *Republic* Book V could be put in place as she claims that they are too unnatural.

⁵² Emlyn-Jones (2007, pp. 10-12) provides a useful account of the cultural background which would have influenced the theories advanced by the characters Thrasymachus, Glaucon and Adeimantus in the *Republic*. The theories provided by Thrasymachus, Glaucon and Adeimantus are considered in detail in chapters 1 and 2 of this study.

changes would be required in order to establish a just society. Another message that Plato appears to be giving is that there is a high price to the achievement of justice in the state and the individual but that it would be worthwhile.

Conclusion

In this chapter consideration has been given to the dramatic and philosophical significance of the interruption from Adeimantus at the beginning of Book V and Socrates' reaction to this interruption. Consideration has also been given to the theories put forward by Socrates in Book V concerning the introduction of the female guardian and the arrangements for women and the family in the ideal state. This chapter also looked at some wider issues relating to the interruption from Adeimantus and the *Republic* overall. In the dialectic enquiry in Book V, Socrates continues to display uncertainty. This leaves the reader confused as to whether he or she should take the theories that are outlined by Socrates seriously or not. The reader can appreciate that during the course of the dialectic enquiry in Book V the respondents continue to play a dramatic role. Nevertheless, this is more subtle than the role played by Polemarchus and Thrasymachus in the elenchus enquiry in Book I and Glaucon and Adeimantus in the display oration method in Book II, part 1.

The interruption from Adeimantus at the beginning of Book V is positive as it enables Socrates and the respondents to progress with the enquiry. Although it changes the direction of the enquiry, it does not prevent Socrates and the respondents from proceeding with the overall enquiry into justice. The interruption occurs at a time when the philosophical enquiry has just been completed into justice in the city and with respect to the individual. This has resulted in a controversial theory of justice being outlined by Socrates and the respondents. The interruption may give a warning to the reader of the radical nature of the theories that will be included in the later Books of the *Republic* and in particular the theory of knowledge as outlined by Socrates in Books VI and VII.

In this example, philosophical elements of the dialogue have interacted with the dramatic elements. The increased dramatic tension at the beginning of Book V coincides with an increase in the intensity and unorthodoxy of the philosophical enquiry and the theories that are resulting from it. The proposals that Socrates advanced prior

to this interruption concerning the just state and just individual did not provide sufficient detail concerning the practical arrangements for implementing the ideal state. The detailed enquiry into women and the family in Book V forces Socrates and the respondents to think through the implications of the theories that they have put forward in the dialectic enquiry, which started at 368a, Book II, part 2. Indeed, Book V and the later Books of the *Republic* alert the reader to the practical implications of the ideal state and soul. In the next chapter, consideration is given to the role of the philosopher in society.

Chapter 5

Adeimantus: The role of the philosopher in society

Introduction

This chapter focuses on Book VI and early Book VII of the *Republic* where Socrates and the respondents consider the role of the philosopher in society. There are several highly dramatic interruptions and illustrations in this part of the *Republic*, including the interruption from Adeimantus at 487b and the allegory of the cave in early Book VII. In section 1 of this chapter, consideration is given to the interruption from Adeimantus at 487b and on the initial response to this from Socrates. Section 2 looks at the defence of the philosopher as outlined by Socrates. Section 3 considers the simile of the sun, the image of the line and the allegory of the cave. Section 4 focuses on some wider issues concerning the interruption from Adeimantus in early Book VI and how this relates to the *Republic* overall. The interruptions from Adeimantus and Glaucon, as discussed in this chapter, bring to light some significant weaknesses with the theories advanced by Socrates in Books VI and VII of the *Republic*.

(Section 1)

The Interruption from Adeimantus In early Book VI and the Initial response from Socrates

In early Book VI there is a dramatic interruption from Adeimantus in which he appears to criticise the method of enquiry adopted by Socrates in the *Republic*. He also criticises the philosophers in contemporary society. Adeimantus observes that when people hear Socrates speak 'they have an uneasy feeling that, because they're not very experienced in this procedure of question and answer, each question in the argument leads them a little further astray, until at the end of it all their small admissions are added up and they come a cropper and are shown to have contradicted themselves' (487b). Adeimantus proceeds to observe that the majority of philosophers are useless members of society. With regard to philosophers, Adeimantus claims that 'in practice people who study philosophy too long, and don't

treat it simply as part of their early education and then drop it, become, most of them, very odd birds, not to say thoroughly vicious' (487c-d).¹ This is an interesting parallel to Callicles in the *Gorgias*, 485c-d, where Callicles argues that philosophy is not something for serious adults.

This is in response to Socrates' assertion at 473d, which is referred to as "wave three", and which contends that philosophers are the only people who should rule the state.² Adeimantus' interruption continues to 487e, where he asks Socrates 'Then how, can you possibly say that society's troubles will never cease until it is ruled by philosophers, if you agree that they're useless members of society?' Following this interruption, Adeimantus takes over as the main respondent in this part of the *Republic*.

This is a strong and critical interruption from Adeimantus.³ It appears to be a criticism of the elenchus method of enquiry as featured in *Republic* Book I and a number of the other dialogues of Plato. This is because it is a characteristic of the elenchus method that, through Socrates' questioning, the respondent ends up contradicting himself.⁴ But, it is unclear to the reader why Adeimantus chooses to raise an objection to the elenchus at this point in the *Republic*. Importantly, from Book II, 368a onwards Socrates and the respondents have adopted the dialectic method of enquiry.⁵ In this interruption, Adeimantus could be suggesting that if the respondents had more practice in the elenchus method they might be able to avoid contradicting themselves.

In this criticism, Socrates is being portrayed as seeking to defeat the respondent in the elenchus rather than establishing the truth. Perhaps Plato is portraying Adeimantus at this point as misunderstanding what Socrates is attempting to do, in the way that contemporary society is said to misunderstand the philosopher in *Republic* Book VI. This could help to explain why this criticism is featured in Book VI of the dialogue where the role of the philosopher is being considered, rather than in Book I where the

¹ For a useful discussion concerning the significance of this interruption from Adeimantus, see Reeve (2006, pp. 193-195).

² Consideration is given to the introduction of wave three in the next section of this chapter.

³ In this interruption in early Book VI, Adeimantus is acting as a capable, sympathetic and challenging respondent, as discussed in the typology of key respondents in the introductory chapter of this study. This interruption from Adeimantus reinforces the entry from Thrasymachus at 337c, Book I, where he is critical of the elenchus method.

⁴ The elenchus method of enquiry is discussed in chapter 1 of this study.

⁵ The dialectic method of enquiry is considered in chapter 3 of this enquiry.

elenchus method of enquiry was adopted.

The interruption from Adeimantus may also be designed to alert the reader to the implications of what they have agreed so far during the course of the dialectic enquiry. Perhaps, in his interruption at 487b-d, Adeimantus is also pointing to some weaknesses in the dialectic method. Some have argued that the interruptions from Glaucon and Adeimantus at the beginning of Books II, V and VI are there to demonstrate that they are participating in the enquiry, rather than simply listening to Socrates.⁶ However, in this interruption, Adeimantus appears to be going much further than that and pointing out some genuine difficulties concerning the theories being advanced, the form of enquiry being adopted and the capability of the philosopher. With regard to the dialectic method in Book IV, Socrates and the respondents agreed to the establishment of the tripartite city. However, this laid the foundations for what Glaucon and Adeimantus are now questioning, that is, the establishment of the guardian class, which would be comprised of philosophers.

Indeed, Socrates and the respondents do appear to be advancing contradictory arguments.⁷ They agree that philosophers should rule the ideal state, for the good of the state overall. However, they also agree that most philosophers are considered to be useless members of contemporary society. Significantly, Socrates admits that 'In our attempt to find the cause of this reproach we are now faced with the question, why are most philosophers rogues? And this is why we have been compelled to bring our definition of the nature of the true philosopher in again' (490d). Surprisingly, Adeimantus appears to be adopting the elenchus method of enquiry to question Socrates in his interruption at (487b-d).⁸ It would be rather ironic if Adeimantus was also criticising the dialectic method, as Socrates then uses this method to answer Adeimantus' objection concerning the philosopher. Socrates and the respondents continue to adopt the dialectic method of enquiry up to Book X, 614b, where Socrates narrates the Myth of Er. What is the reader supposed to make of this approach? Plato, through the character Socrates and the respondents, appears to be alerting the reader and audience to some concerns with regard to both the elenchus

⁶ Rutherford 1995, p. 210.

⁷ There are other examples in the dialectic method in the *Republic* where Socrates and the respondents appear to be contradicting themselves. These are discussed in section 4 of this chapter.

⁸ Maynard 2000, p. 1.

and dialectic methods of enquiry at this stage.

Socrates' reaction to Adeimantus' interruption is surprising. Firstly, he does not provide a defence of the elenchus or the dialectic methods of enquiry. Secondly, he agrees with Adeimantus that philosophers are useless members of society. This leaves the reader somewhat confused. Indeed, it suggests that Plato, through the characters of Adeimantus and Socrates, seems to be rejecting the elenchus method of enquiry for the time being.⁹ As observed above, he may also be expressing some doubt about the dialectic method. Just before this interruption from Adeimantus, Socrates is portrayed in a confident manner having concluded the discussion of the qualities of character required in the guardians. Up to that point in the discussion in Book VI, Glaucon and Adeimantus appeared to be in agreement with Socrates (487a). Indeed, the response from Glaucon at this stage is 'Momus himself could find no fault there' (487a). However, as happened earlier in the dialectic enquiry, Socrates' confidence does not last long.

In order to defend what he refers to as 'the better type of philosopher in contemporary society' (488a), Socrates proceeds to give an illustration of the state of affairs on board a ship (488a-489a).¹⁰ In this illustration, the captain of the ship is described as 'larger and stronger than any of the crew, but a bit deaf and short-sighted, and similarly limited in seamanship' (488b). The crew are described as quarrelsome and ignorant. They lack any knowledge of navigation and are competing with each other to take control of the ship from the steersman. They do not appreciate the level of knowledge and skill that is required of the steersman to navigate a ship. Importantly, they have more admiration for the sailor who 'knows how to lend a hand in controlling the captain by force or fraud' than they do for the captain and steersman (488d). This is because they believe that the sailor who is prepared to take over the job of steersman can do a better job. Through their ignorance, the sailors admire the sailor who professes to have the skills required to navigate the ship, rather than the true steersman. Indeed, Socrates argues that the sailors would regard the true steersman as 'a word-spinner and a star-gazer, of no use to them at all' (488e-489a).

Surprisingly, Adeimantus agrees with this assertion by Socrates without any

⁹ The elenchus method of enquiry does not disappear forever at this stage from the dialogues of Plato. It features in the *Theaetetus*, which is considered to have been written later than the *Republic*.

¹⁰ For a useful discussion of the ship illustration see Keyt (2006, pp. 189-213). His comparison of the unruly ship with the normal ship is of particular interest.

questioning. He could have sought clarification from Socrates on how this illustration answers the concerns that he raised regarding the philosophers in contemporary society.

Once he has given the ship illustration, Socrates observes that 'my illustration is intended to show the present attitude of society towards the true philosopher' (489a). He suggests that the present day politicians can be compared with the sailors on board the ship (489c).¹¹ Adeimantus gives his agreement to this without any argument. Also, surprisingly, Adeimantus does not raise any further concern at this stage about the method of enquiry being adopted, despite his serious concern expressed at 487b-c. The interruption from Adeimantus, together with the ship illustration, highlights the unfortunate plight of the philosopher in Plato's contemporary society. This reminds the reader of the plight of the just man as outlined by Glaucon in Book II, 361b-362a, where he compares the lives of the just and unjust man. Glaucon asserts that the just man would suffer torture, imprisonment and crucifixion.¹² This is because both the just man and the philosopher are misunderstood and treated badly by society.

In the ship illustration, Socrates demonstrates a very low opinion of the ordinary person in society, that is, the equivalent of the worker in the ideal state, who in my view the sailors appear to represent. This is due to their lack of knowledge of the Forms. It is interesting that the ship's captain is portrayed as being 'limited in seamanship' (488b). He is unable to defend the steersman against the sailors. Some have argued that the captain represents the Athenian assembly.¹³ Others have alerted the reader to connections between the ship illustration and the simile of the cave. In particular, some have argued that the prisoners in the cave, like the sailors on the ship, represent the politically ambitious citizens of the contemporary city.¹⁴

I would suggest that the captain, who should have been able to maintain overall control of the ship, appears to represent the auxiliaries in the ideal state, but not functioning properly. He could be representative of the auxiliaries in the unjust states

¹¹ Cross and Woollsey (1964, p. 197) assert that the sailors in the ship illustration represent 'demagogues'.

¹² The arguments from Glaucon concerning the lives of the just and unjust man are considered in detail in chapter 2 of this study.

¹³ Keyt 2006, pp. 193-194.

¹⁴ Wilberding 2004, p. 126.

and souls as outlined by Socrates in Books VIII and IX, where the tripartite state no longer functions according to plan. If the steersman, who under the management of the captain was responsible for navigating the ship, was being compared with the true philosopher, the reader would expect him, together with the captain, to have had arrangements in place to defend the ship, against the sailors. What are we to make of this point?

Importantly, the guardian rulers in the ideal state would need to have strong leadership skills, in order to ensure that the people were kept within their designated classes. Unlike the steersman in the ship illustration, the guardians in the ideal state would have the support of the auxiliaries to defend their position. Will the guardians, together with the auxiliaries in the ideal state, be able to maintain control of the workers in the long-term? The ship illustration suggests that this may not be possible. Perhaps Plato, through the ship illustration, is expressing doubt here about the long-term viability of the ideal state or at least raising the issue of sustainability. This prefigures the discussion of unjust states and souls in Books VIII and IX of the *Republic*, which ends with the ideal state deteriorating into a tyranny.

The overall argument that Socrates is advancing concerning the philosopher ruler becomes clearer to the reader and audience in the background when Socrates and the respondents proceed to enquire into the question of why philosophers have become corrupt and useless members of contemporary society and what might be done to change this state of affairs. These issues are considered in the next section of this chapter.

(Section 2)

The defence of the philosopher from Socrates

- The Introduction of wave three

The interruption from Adeimantus at 487b-d was prompted by an earlier argument from Socrates where he advanced what is referred to as the third and 'biggest wave' (473c).¹⁵ In the third wave, Socrates asserts that 'The society we have described can

¹⁵ Kahn (1993, pp. 140-142) notes the cumulative nature of the image of the three waves as presented by Socrates in the *Republic* Book V. He alerts the reader to some other examples of this technique of presentation in Books II and III of the *Republic*.

never grow into a reality or see the light of day, and there will be no end to the troubles of states, or indeed, my dear Glaucon, of humanity itself, till philosophers become kings in this world, or till those we now call kings and rulers really and truly become philosophers, and political power and philosophy thus come into the same hands, while the many natures now content to follow either to the exclusion of the other are forcibly debarred from doing so' (473c-e). Some have noted the importance of *Republic*, 473c, Book V to 540d, Book VII and have argued that this section of the *Republic* should be read as a reply to wave three.¹⁶ It also raises a challenge to the theory of the just state as put forward by Socrates in Book IV in that it relies on the plan to put philosophers in charge of the state being introduced successfully.

Glaucon makes a strong response to this argument from Socrates. He states 'My dear Socrates, if you make pronouncements of that sort, you can't be surprised if a large number of decent people take their coats off, pick up the nearest weapon, and come after you in their shirt sleeves to do something terrible to you. If you can't find an argument to hold them off and escape, you'll learn to your cost what it is to be laughed at' (473e-474a). This is a particularly strong response from Glaucon. It highlights the controversial nature of the third wave that Socrates has advanced. The reader is left confused as to why Plato has chosen to draw the reader's attention to the controversial aspects of the theories being advanced in the *Republic*, rather than the more acceptable elements of the theories.

This is becoming a regular feature of the *Republic*, with Socrates advancing controversial theories with each wave and then having to defend these theories. In wave one, Socrates argued that some women would have the capacity to become guardians (456a). In wave two, Socrates put forward the theory that guardians should live in common, rather than in traditional marriage unions. Also, that the children of guardians should be brought up in state nurseries, rather than by their own parents (457c-d).¹⁷ In these examples Plato appears to be alerting the reader to problems associated with the theories being advanced. This places doubt on whether Plato expected the reader to be fully convinced of the theories outlined in Books V, VI and VII of the *Republic*.

¹⁶ Maynard 2000, pp. 2-4.

¹⁷ Waves one and two are considered in chapter 4 of this enquiry.

Socrates' response to Glaucon at this point is interesting. He blames Glaucon for pulling him up in the argument and Glaucon agrees with him. Socrates observes 'But it's all your doing' and in response to this Glaucon says 'And I've done very well too' (474a). Socrates had argued that philosophers should be put in charge of the ideal city and Glaucon had pointed out that this would not have the backing of the majority of people. This prefigures the attack by Adeimantus on the method of enquiry being adopted by Socrates and the respondents, as discussed in section 1 above.

However, Glaucon agrees to help Socrates proceed with the enquiry into how to convince the sceptics that philosophers should be in charge in the ideal state (474b-c). They set out to defend their argument by 'showing that there are some who are naturally fitted for philosophy and political leadership, while the rest should follow their lead but let philosophy alone' (474b-c). They proceed by considering how the philosopher should be defined.

The discussion of the definition of the philosopher runs from 474b, Book V to 487a, Book VI. In this discussion, Socrates takes the lead with Glaucon responding on behalf of himself and Adeimantus. Socrates asserts that the philosopher has a passion for wisdom (475b) and a strong desire to learn (475c). In addition to this, Socrates argues that the philosopher looks to the Form of Beauty rather than the many beautiful things (476b).¹⁸ The philosopher is awake and possesses knowledge, as opposed to the non-philosopher who is described as dreaming and possessing only opinion (476d). Socrates and the respondents enquire further into the difference between knowledge and opinion and they agree that opinion is intermediate between knowledge and ignorance (478c-d). During the course of this discussion, Glaucon is in agreement with Socrates and he makes positive responses at regular intervals. Examples of these include: 'And we shall be quite right' (475c), 'That is certainly so' (476b), 'Yes, I understand' (477c), 'That follows' (478a), 'Very much so' (478c), and 'Precisely' (479d).

Socrates and the respondents agree that 'the many conventional views held by most people about beauty and the rest hover somewhere between what is not and what

¹⁸ Cooper (1999, p. 142) notes that the guardians would spend fifteen years working in the ideal city before they would be ready to study and gain knowledge of the ultimate Form, that is, the Form of the Good. Once they gained knowledge of the Form of the Good, the guardians would take turns to rule the city (*Republic*, 540a-b). The Form of the Good is considered in section 3 of this chapter.

fully is' (479d). In response to this, Glaucon raises the question as to whether the ordinary person would be annoyed with Socrates and the respondents for accusing them of holding opinions rather than knowledge. Socrates argues that they would have no right to be annoyed 'at the truth' (480a). Surprisingly, Glaucon does not pursue this point any further with Socrates. Indeed, given the strength of the reaction from Glaucon at (473e-474a) to Socrates' assertion that philosophers should be put in charge of the ideal state (473c-e), the reader is left puzzled as to why the character Glaucon is portrayed as being so willing to agree with the points advanced by Socrates concerning the philosopher. One theory may be that this encourages the reader to take on the role of the respondent at these points in the dialogue and to reflect upon the theories being advanced by Socrates.

It is worth noting that in the arguments that Socrates is outlining in this part of the *Republic*, he appears to be referring to the guardians in the ideal state, rather than the philosophers in their contemporary society. Through their education, the guardians would be given the opportunity to seek to gain knowledge of the Forms.¹⁹ Although the philosophers in contemporary society would aspire to gain knowledge, they would not have reached the level of knowledge and understanding of the guardians. Therefore, like the ordinary members of society, they would possess opinion rather than knowledge. However, it was the philosophers in contemporary society to whom Glaucon referred in his reaction to Socrates' assertion that philosophers should be in charge of the ideal city. So, although Glaucon pulled up Socrates concerning this point, Socrates now appears to be changing the focus of the discussion. It is important to note that Socrates and the respondents have not yet considered the second stage of the education of the guardians, as outlined in Book VII, 521c-541a, which includes dialectic. This would enable the guardians to study the Forms and ultimately the Form of the Good.²⁰

This discussion continues with an enquiry into the character of the philosopher which runs from 484a-487a, Book VI. Despite the earlier protests from Glaucon and

¹⁹ Weiss (2001, pp. 203-209) compares the different approaches taken to opinion in the *Meno* and the *Republic*. She observes that with the introduction of the Forms in the *Republic*, opinion no longer carries the weight that it held in the *Meno*. Notably, in the ideal city, the guardians would take on responsibility for all moral enquiry and moral decisions on behalf of the city as a whole, due to their knowledge of the Forms (Weiss 2001, p. 15).

²⁰ With regard to the education of the guardians, Gill (2004, p. 3) points out that, in order to understand the Form of the Good, the guardians would need to gain an appreciation of the connections between the different branches of knowledge.

Adeimantus, this ends with Socrates and the respondents agreeing, for now, that subject to them being given the right education and reaching an appropriate level of maturity, the philosophers are the only members of society who could be trusted to rule the state (487a).

There seems to be some significance in Glaucon's assertion at 473e-474a that hordes of people would pick up the nearest weapon and rush naked at you, in reaction to "wave three" as advanced by Socrates. In this example from Book V, one of the messages being put forward seems to be that the lack of understanding of ordinary people could lead them into a situation where they would use a weapon against an innocent person. Some have argued that this passage brings out the difference between the philosopher who possesses knowledge and the lover of sights who does not.²¹ I would suggest that it is included by Plato to justify the level of control that the guardians would need to maintain in the ideal state, for the good of the state overall. It also raises the question in the reader's mind as to how the guardians would enforce the ideal state, that is, whether they would be able to assert that level of control.

- The corruption of philosophers in contemporary society

After he has given the ship analogy in Book VI, Socrates claims that, 'the most damaging reproach to philosophy is brought on it by those who pretend to practice it' (489d). Socrates asserts that through the ship analogy they have explained why the majority of philosophers are useless members of society. He proposes that they should proceed to consider why the majority of philosophers are corrupt and he asserts that philosophy should not be blamed for this state of affairs (489d-e). Adeimantus, who is acting as respondent at this point, agrees to proceed in this way.

They start by looking back at the characteristics that the philosopher would need to possess, which they had agreed earlier in the discussion.²² They then note that the philosopher seeks the truth (490a-b), and seeks to gain knowledge of the Forms (or ideals) rather than focusing on the particular objects that surround him or her (490b). In

²¹ Roochnik 2003, pp. 62-65.

²² Here Socrates and the respondents are referring back to 484b-487a, Book VI, where they considered the qualities of character that the philosopher would need to possess and how these would make them suitable to rule in the ideal state.

addition to this, the philosopher would need to have a just and self-disciplined character (490c). Socrates suggests that they do not need to review all the qualities of the philosopher that they had agreed earlier. He then observes 'You will remember we found that they also included courage, greatness of mind, quickness to learn and a good memory' (490c). He recalls that it was at that point that Adeimantus interrupted and that 'In our attempt to find the cause of this reproach we are now faced with the question, why are most philosophers rogues? And that is why we have been compelled to bring our definition of the nature of the true philosopher in again' (490d).

It is interesting to consider how Socrates would have proceeded with the enquiry if Adeimantus had not interrupted at 487b-d. The interruption from Adeimantus brought out the difference between the philosophers in contemporary society and the guardians that Socrates was describing, who would rule in the ideal state. If Adeimantus had not interrupted, Socrates would not have had to provide a detailed defence of the philosopher. Also, it might have been unnecessary for Socrates to give the simile of the sun, image of the line and allegory of the cave, which are designed to illustrate the level of knowledge that the guardians would possess. The interruption from Adeimantus and the subsequent discussion between Socrates and the respondents alert the reader to the controversial aspects of the theories being advanced in the enquiry in the *Republic*. It also raises a question as to whether Plato expected the reader to accept these theories. Importantly, it also highlights the strength of the role of Adeimantus and Glaucon in the dialectic enquiry.

The character Socrates did not make it clear enough to the respondents and the reader in the enquiry in Book IV that he envisaged that philosophers would take on the role of guardian in the ideal state. Indeed, he admits this at 497c-d. Notably, in the course of the discussion concerning the role of the philosopher in contemporary society, Adeimantus seeks clarification when he observes that 'I was going to ask whether it was the state whose foundation we have been describing' (497c). The reader is left with the impression that the character Socrates may have been trying to avoid this controversial issue, in the same way that he tried to avoid discussion of women and the family in Book IV, 423e-424a. The reader is left confused as to how the ideal state could ever get off the ground with such a gap between the philosophers in contemporary society and the guardians as envisaged by Socrates. The interruption

from Adeimantus has raised serious concern about the theories that have been advanced in the dialectic enquiry in the *Republic*. It leaves the reader uncertain as to whether the better type of philosophers in contemporary society could ever aspire to become guardians. It also raises a doubt as to whether the ideal state could ever become a reality.²³

Socrates and the respondents continue the enquiry by considering why the philosophic nature is vulnerable and has become corrupt. Furthermore, they consider why some members of society, who do not possess the characteristics required of the philosopher, choose to take on the role of philosopher. It has been observed by some that, at this point in the *Republic*, Plato is being very perceptive in bringing out his awareness of the fact that the most intelligent members of society are in danger of being corrupted.²⁴ Socrates asserts that the good qualities that the philosopher possesses, for example, courage and self-discipline, make the philosopher vulnerable to becoming corrupt within the wrong environment (491b-e). Interestingly, Socrates does not blame the individual sophists for this as he claims that they do not have a sufficient level of influence.²⁵ Instead, Socrates blames society as a whole for the corruption of the philosopher. Indeed he accuses society of being 'sophists on a grand scale' (492a-b). Notably, Socrates claims that the philosophers would be punished by society, and even put to death, if they did not obey (492d). This appears to be a reference to the real Socrates being put to death and to how he claimed he was misunderstood by society.

Socrates observes that members of society would use the talents of the philosophers for their own good, rather than the good of the philosopher or the state overall. With regard to the philosopher, Socrates notes that 'his friends and fellow-citizens will want to use him for their own purposes when he grows up' (494b). This pressure would result in the majority of philosophers becoming corrupt and taking on the corrupt values of society as a whole. It would also lead to the philosopher becoming ambitious and seeking a powerful position within the state (494c-d). It is

²³ Importantly, later in the dialectic enquiry in book IX, Glaucon and Socrates express doubt as to whether the ideal state could ever become a reality on earth (592a-b).

²⁴ Mitchell and Lucas 2003, p. 53. However, against Plato, they suggest that the young intellectuals would be more vulnerable to being influenced by the intelligentsia rather than society as a whole. To back this up, they give the example of Marxism.

²⁵ Here the character Socrates may be playing down the level of influence that the sophists had within society. Lawson-Tancred (1998, pp. 6-18) suggests that the sophists had a high level of influence in Athens during Plato's time.

notable that, through the character Socrates, Plato is being highly critical of society at this point in the enquiry.

During the course of this discussion, Adeimantus responds on behalf of Glaucon and himself. Despite the strong condemnation of philosophers in contemporary society by Adeimantus in his interruption at 487b-d, he is very much in agreement with Socrates in the enquiry into why philosophers have become corrupt members of society. Apart from the occasional request for further clarification, the responses from Adeimantus are positive and they include: 'That is as fair a reply as we can make' (490b), 'Yes, reasonable enough' (491d), 'Yes, punish they certainly do' (492d), and 'Yes, that's bound to happen' (494b).

It is interesting that Glaucon or Adeimantus do not interrupt the discussion at this stage in order to defend society against the accusations made by Socrates. This encourages the reader to take on the role of the respondent and to question the theories being outlined by Socrates. For example, Glaucon and Adeimantus could have argued that philosophers should take some of the blame themselves for becoming corrupt. They could have objected that Socrates is portraying society too negatively in the way it treats philosophers. Indeed, in Books VIII and IX of the *Republic*, Socrates acknowledges that the guardian class would be subject to decline when he considers the deterioration of the ideal state and soul. Importantly, in the discussion concerning imperfect states and souls, Socrates does attach some blame to the guardians for the deterioration of the ideal state. He observes that despite their training, the guardian rulers would make an error in their calculation for the breeding cycle of guardians which would lead to the decline and eventual downfall of the guardian class and the ideal state (546b-d). This alerts the reader to some possible flaws with the ideal society that Socrates is advancing in the *Republic*, which would threaten its sustainability in the long-term.

Now that they have identified why the majority of philosophers become corrupt, Socrates and the respondents proceed to consider why non-philosophers take on the role of philosopher. Socrates asserts that 'a whole crowd of squatters gladly sally out from the meaner trades, at which they have acquired a considerable degree of skill, and rush into philosophy.' 'For philosophy, abused as it is, still retains a far higher reputation than other occupations' (495d). Notably, Socrates accuses these non-

philosophers of lacking wisdom and practising sophistry (496a). Adeimantus expresses agreement with Socrates concerning this point, on behalf of Glaucon and himself. At this stage in the enquiry, the reader can begin to appreciate why Adeimantus raised his concerns about philosophers in contemporary society in his interruption and why Socrates agreed with him that philosophers are useless and corrupt.

Significantly, Socrates claims that some genuine philosophers have managed to escape becoming corrupt. However, they have opted to live quietly and not enter into political life. It is worth observing that Plato chose not to enter into politics. It is also worth noting that the few genuine philosophers left in contemporary society would have their work cut out to form the ideal state. Indeed, this would appear to be an important obstacle to the establishment of the ideal state.

- The possibility of the philosopher ruler

At 497b-c, Socrates makes an interesting comment. He has just asserted that there is no form of society currently in existence that is capable of making the best use of the philosophic nature. With regard to the philosophic nature, Socrates observes 'If only it could find a social structure whose excellence matched its own, then its truly divine quality would appear clearly, and all other characters and ways of life stand revealed as merely human' (497b-c). The reader can appreciate that in this passage Socrates is referring to the ideal state, as outlined in *Republic* Book IV, where the philosophers would be in charge. Indeed, this is noted by Adeimantus. However, this passage leaves the reader with the concern that Socrates' primary objective in the introduction of the ideal state is to provide the philosophers with a form of state in which they would have the opportunity to develop fully.²⁶ The fact that it would also be for the good of the other classes within the ideal state appears to be of secondary concern to Socrates at this point in the enquiry. It is surprising that the respondents do not raise any objections to Socrates at this stage.²⁷

Rather than proceeding confidently with the theories that he is outlining, Socrates shows signs of uncertainty and hesitation at this point. He admits 'I was afraid of what

²⁶ This is despite the fact that in *Republic* Book IV it has been argued by Socrates and the respondents that the ideal state for the philosophers is the ideal state for all three classes.

²⁷ The ideal state and soul is considered in detail in chapter 4 of this study.

your criticisms had already shown to be a long and difficult demonstration; and the hardest part of it is still to come' (497d). When Adeimantus asks what Socrates is referring to here, Socrates explains that they have yet to consider 'How a state can handle philosophy without destroying itself' (497d). Socrates shows further signs of uncertainty when he admits that he does not lack the will but may lack the ability to demonstrate this point (497e). However, Socrates quickly recovers his confidence and he argues that in contemporary society people take up philosophy at too young an age (497e-498a). He asserts that children should only be exposed to a limited amount of philosophical training. Instead, philosophical training should take place when they are adults and they have the mental capacity to handle philosophy (498b-c).²⁸

At this stage in the discussion, there is an unexpected reference to Thrasymachus. Adeimantus argues that the majority of the people, including Thrasymachus, would not be convinced by the arguments being advanced by Socrates concerning the introduction of the philosopher ruler. In response to this, Socrates says 'Now don't start a quarrel between me and Thrasymachus, when we've just become friends - not that we were ever really enemies' (498c-d). Socrates asserts that he will not give up until he has managed to convince Thrasymachus and the rest of the audience or at least prepared them for 'a future incarnation when they will meet these arguments again' (498d).²⁹

The reader is left confused as to why Plato refers to the character Thrasymachus at this point. This is the second last reference to Thrasymachus in the *Republic*. Therefore, it would appear to be of some significance. It is also a reference to the wider audience present at the discussion. Socrates demonstrates signs of hesitancy here in that he is not sure if he will be able to convince Thrasymachus and the wider audience of the theories that he is advancing. It might only prepare them for further discussion of the theories being outlined. Another point worth noting is that in the ideal state it is only necessary for the guardians and auxiliaries to be convinced that the ideal state is the

²⁸ See also, *Republic*, 535a-540e, where the philosophical development of the philosopher is discussed in more detail.

²⁹ The reader is not convinced of Socrates' sincerity in his desire to convince Thrasymachus of the arguments that he is putting forward in the dialectic enquiry. In chapter 1, section 3, of this study, I argue that Thrasymachus is not fully defeated by Socrates in the *Republic* overall. In chapter 4, section 2, I argue that characters such as Thrasymachus would have to be controlled by the guardians by force in the ideal state.

best form of state. The other classes would be required to play their designated role within the state, by force if necessary. This would be regardless of whether they considered the state to be ideal or not. Indeed, due to their lack of knowledge of the Forms, the majority of the people would not be in a position to make an informed judgement concerning the benefits of the ideal state overall.

Socrates provides an explanation as to why the majority of people would not be convinced by the arguments that he is giving concerning the philosopher ruler. He notes that they have never seen the ideal state in action. Significantly, they have never been ruled by a ruler who ruled for the good of the state rather than himself (498e-499a). Socrates then argues that it would be possible to persuade the majority of people of the benefits of introducing the philosopher ruler. According to Socrates, the people would be less angry with the proposal to put philosophers in charge of the state if they realised that the philosopher would be guided by knowledge of the Forms, rather than opinion (501b). Also, the character, which the philosopher rulers possessed would make them suitable to rule (501d). Socrates then argues 'Will they still be angry when we say that until society is controlled by philosophers there will be no end to the troubles of states or their citizens, and no realization in practice of the institutions we have described in theory' (501e)?

In response to Socrates, Adeimantus makes an interesting comment. He suggests that the majority of the people would be less angry, but still not convinced by Socrates (501e). However, at 501e-502a, Socrates then seeks approval from Adeimantus for them to go further and assume that they have convinced the people that philosophers should be put in charge of the state. Surprisingly, Adeimantus lets Socrates get away with this point. This seems uncharacteristic of Socrates and the respondents who have been prepared to enter into more detailed argument at other points in the enquiry in the *Republic*. Examples of these include the discussion of the ideal state and soul in Book IV as well as the enquiry into imperfect states and souls in Books VIII and IX. Socrates concludes that 'our proposed legislation, if put into effect, would be the ideal, and that to put it into effect, though difficult, would not be impossible' (502c), and the respondents appear to agree.

The concern expressed by Adeimantus in *Republic* Book VI would appear to be an accurate reflection of how the majority of the people would have reacted to the

proposal by Socrates to put philosophers in charge of the state. This is exemplified by the representation of the philosophers in *The Clouds* by Aristophanes as being out of touch and of no practical use to society. Also, of not recognising the official Gods.³⁰ This gives the reader an appreciation of the level of mistrust in society towards philosophers and philosophy in Plato's time, at least the kind of philosopher that Plato depicts, and of the difficulties that philosophers faced in putting forward their theories and having a voice in society.

The reader is left in doubt at this stage as to whether Socrates and the respondents really thought that they could convince the majority of the people of the benefits of introducing the philosopher ruler. Indeed, as observed above, it is unclear why they felt that the people would need to be convinced. Later, in *Republic* Book VII, Socrates and the respondents consider how the ideal state could be established. They agree that the best way for this to be achieved would be to remove all the citizens over the age of ten from the state and to bring up the remaining children according to the methods and rules of the ideal state that they had described (540e-541a). Importantly, this would not involve seeking the consent of the people. This reminds the reader of the level of control that the guardian rulers would have in the ideal state, which would even include the arrangements for the procreation of the guardian class.³¹

(Section 3)

The Simile of the Sun, Image of the Line and Allegory of the Cave

Once Socrates and the respondents have given provisional agreement that it would be possible to put into effect the ideal state, with philosophers in charge, they proceed to consider further the qualities and knowledge of the guardians within the ideal state.³² In this part of the *Republic*, 502c-521b, Socrates gives the simile of the sun, the image of the line and the allegory of the cave. These provide the reader and audience with a graphic illustration of the level of knowledge, which the guardians

³⁰ For a useful discussion on how the philosophers were perceived by society at the time of Plato, see (Natali 1987, pp. 232-241).

³¹ This is considered in chapter 4 of this enquiry.

³² As observed in section 2 above, Socrates and the respondents express doubt later about the possibility of the ideal state actually existing (Book IX, 592a-b).

would aspire to possess as opposed to the workers and auxiliaries in the ideal state.³³ This forms the basis for the discussion of the second stage of the education of the guardians in Book VII, 521c-541a, and especially dialectic as outlined from 531d-534e. Together, these attempt to give further backing to the theory that philosophers should be put in charge of the ideal state. In this section, consideration is given in particular to the simile of the sun and the allegory of the cave.

- Simile of the Sun and Image of the Line

During the course of the enquiry, Socrates and Adeimantus, who is acting as respondent at this stage, agree that in their enquiry into the qualities and knowledge of the guardians they must 'demand the highest precision' (504e). Adeimantus then points out that Socrates could not have expected to escape questioning concerning the 'highest form of knowledge and its object' and Socrates agrees with him (504e). At this point, it is suggested that Socrates and the respondents have covered this area in previous discussions. Socrates observes that 'you have certainly often been told that the highest form of knowledge is knowledge of the Form of the Good' (505a).³⁴ However, Socrates then expresses hesitation and doubt when he states that they do not have sufficient knowledge of the Form of the Good, which provides the foundation for all the knowledge that they possess (505a-b).

Importantly, Socrates observes that the guardians in the ideal state would need to possess knowledge of the Form of the Good (506a-b). Interestingly, during the course of their enquiry into the Form of the Good, Socrates and the respondents do not give any consideration to how the guardians would apply their knowledge of the Good to ruling the city. It is surprising that Glaucon and Adeimantus do not raise this issue. Some have argued that one reason for this is the respondents' lack of interest in how the bodies that would administer the ideal city would be organised.³⁵ I would suggest that Plato may have avoided addressing this issue in the *Republic* because, without knowledge of the Form of the Good, Socrates and the respondents could

³³ Mitchell and Lucas (2003, pp. 88-108) provide a useful account of the sun, line and cave and especially with regard to the difficulties in interpreting these illustrations. See also (Irwin 1995, pp. 271-280) and (Cross and Woosley 1964, pp. 196-228) for helpful accounts of the sun, line and cave.

³⁴ It is unclear here whether Plato is referring to previous discussions concerning the Form of the Good in the *Republic* or outside the enquiry in the *Republic*.

³⁵ Pradeau 2002, pp. 67-69.

only speculate about how the guardians could apply this knowledge to ruling the city.

Adeimantus urges Socrates to give his own opinion concerning the Form of the Good (506b-c). In response to this request, Socrates demonstrates uncertainty by claiming again to lack knowledge concerning the Form of the Good (506c). Socrates states 'Then do you want a poor, blind, halting display from me, when you can get splendidly clear accounts from other people' (506c-d)? The reader can appreciate Socrates' irony at this point in the enquiry. However, this is a very negative response from Socrates considering the detailed account of the child of the Good that he proceeds to give. We are not told who the other people that Socrates refers to are, who could give a clearer account of the Form of the Good. They do not appear to be present at the discussion in the *Republic*. Perhaps Socrates is referring to the sophists or the contemporary politicians who might be less hesitant than him in putting forward a view concerning the Good, regardless of whether it was true or false.

We are then told that Glaucon begged Socrates to continue with the enquiry and to provide the best account that he could of the Form of the Good. In response to this, Socrates offers to give an account of the child of the Good, that is, the simile of the sun, rather than the Good itself (506d-e).³⁶ The support that Socrates receives from the respondents at this stage of the enquiry enables him to advance the theory concerning the child of the Good. Nevertheless, it also leaves the reader somewhat suspicious of the approach taken by Socrates in assuming the existence of the Form of the Good without being able to provide a full account of this Form.

When Glaucon grants Socrates his request to describe the child of the Good (506e), rather than the Form of the Good itself, he makes an interesting comment. Glaucon observes that Socrates will still owe them an account of the parent, or the Form of the Good itself (506e). In response, Socrates says 'It's a debt I wish I could pay back to you in full, instead of only paying interest on the loan' (507a). It is worth noting that in the *Republic*, Socrates and the respondents do not return to the issue of the Form of the Good itself. This would appear to be beyond the reach of Socrates and the respondents in the *Republic*. It would also appear to be beyond the reach of Plato.

³⁶ Cooper (1999, p. 143) alerts the reader to Socrates' refusal to give an account of the Form of the Good itself and his need to bring in the simile of the sun, image of the line and allegory of the cave instead. Cooper (1999, pp. 143-144) provides a useful summary of the concept of the Form of the Good that is advanced by Socrates in the *Republic*.

This leaves the reader with the impression that the enquiry into the Form of the Good has not been completed in the *Republic* and that Socrates and the respondents will need to enquire further into this matter in the future. As knowledge of the Form of the Good is central to the role of the philosophers in the ideal state, the reader is left in doubt as to the possibility of the establishment of the tripartite state as outlined by Socrates and the respondents in Book IV. In another example, after Socrates and the respondents have considered the role of women and the family in Book V, they do not return to this issue in the *Republic*.

Interestingly, despite the lack of knowledge that the character Socrates claims to have concerning the Form of the Good, he advances the simile of the sun with confidence. In this simile, Socrates compares the sun with the Form of the Good.³⁷ Socrates observes that the sun enables the individual to see, but that it is not sight (508b). Also, the sun 'causes the process of generation, growth and nourishment, without itself being such a process' (509b). We are told that the Form of the Good enables the mind to seek truth and reality and gain knowledge (508d). Socrates asserts that 'The good therefore may be said to be the source not only of the intelligibility of the objects of knowledge, but also of their being and reality' (509b).

Socrates, with the support of the respondents, proceeds to give the image of the line, 509d-511e. In this image, Socrates highlights the level of knowledge that the guardians would possess in the ideal state, due to their knowledge of the Forms, which they would gain through dialectic enquiry.³⁸ Socrates concludes that four states of mind: intelligence, reason, belief and illusion, correspond with the four sections of the line (511d-e).³⁹ While Socrates gives the simile of the sun and the image of the line, the respondents make the occasional response in agreement with him. Indeed, when Socrates has finished the image of the line, Glaucon states that he understands and agrees with the image advanced by Socrates (511e). It is worth observing that as these illustrations are presented by Socrates, the reader and audience are in danger of forgetting that Socrates has not yet established the existence of the Form of the Good itself.

³⁷ Murdoch (1997, pp. 169-179) provides an interesting exploration of the concept of the good, which includes the concept of it put forward by Socrates in the *Republic*.

³⁸ Socrates gives an account of dialectic enquiry in *Republic* Book VII, 531d-534e.

³⁹ Annas (1997, pp. 148-151) considers the image of the line as outlined by Socrates and she asserts that Plato's use of imagery to illustrate a point may be resulting in a lack of intellectual clarity (p. 149). This is because Socrates has yet to prove the existence of the Form of the Good.

- Allegory of the Cave

Having given the simile of the sun and the image of the line, Socrates proceeds to put forward a third illustration, that is, the allegory of the cave. This allegory is designed to illustrate to the reader and audience in the background the level of knowledge that the guardians would have in the ideal state, due to their knowledge of the Form of the Good and the other Forms. It also brings to light the ignorance of members of contemporary society. Socrates introduces this allegory by saying 'I want you to go on to picture the enlightenment or ignorance of our human condition somewhat as follows. Imagine an underground chamber like a cave, with a long entrance open to the daylight and as wide as the cave' (514a). We are told that in the cave there are prisoners who are fastened in such a way that they are unable to move and can only look straight ahead. Socrates continues 'Some way off, behind and higher up, a fire is burning, and between the fire and the prisoners and above them runs a road, in front of which a curtain-wall has been built' (514b). It transpires that, due to the physical make-up of their surrounds, the prisoners are only in a position to see shadows of goods being carried by men outside the cave. Due to their lack of knowledge of what is going on behind them or outside the cave, the prisoners take these shadows to be real objects. As a result of this, any communication between the prisoners concerning the objects that they see would be based on the false premise that these objects are real.⁴⁰

Socrates describes what would happen if one of the prisoners escaped out of the cave and into the daylight. At first, he would have difficulty adjusting to the light. However, once he got used to being out in the daylight, he would be able to see the objects around him and eventually look up at the sun. Through this experience, he would come to realise that the objects that he used to see in the cave were only shadows of objects being carried by people outside the cave. The escaped prisoner would have reached a higher level of understanding than the prisoners back

⁴⁰ Wheaten Bestor (1996, pp. 33-82) alerts the reader to the constraint that their surrounds would put on the prisoners' ability to communicate effectively with one another in the cave. He asserts that, in the allegory of the cave, Plato assumes that the prisoners could communicate effectively with one another, despite this constraint.

in the cave (515c-516c).⁴¹

In this allegory, the prisoners in the cave appear to represent the workers in the ideal state, due to their lack of knowledge of the Forms. Like the sailors in the ship illustration, they also appear to represent the contemporary politicians, due to their ignorance and competitiveness for power.⁴² Notably, Socrates observed earlier that the sailors in the ship illustration represented the politicians in contemporary society (489c). This leaves the reader confused as to what Socrates means when he refers to the prisoners in the cave as being 'drawn from life' (515a). Perhaps he is suggesting that the prisoners in the cave, like the politicians in contemporary society, are the worst examples of human beings. In contrast with this, the prisoner who escapes and gains a view of the sun, appears to represent the guardian rulers in the ideal state, who would have the opportunity to gain knowledge of the Form of the Good and the other Forms.⁴³

Socrates observes that 'you won't go wrong if you connect the ascent into the upper world and the sight of the objects there with the upward progress of the mind into the intelligible region' (517b). Glaucon makes an interesting response at this stage. He agrees with Socrates as far as he is able to understand him (517c). This suggests that Socrates has moved somewhat ahead of the respondents at this point in the discussion. The prisoner returning to the cave appears to represent the guardian taking his or her turn to rule within the ideal state. The description given by Socrates of the reaction of the prisoners in the cave to the escaped prisoner who returns to the cave is worrying. Socrates argues that 'if anyone tried to release them and lead them up, they would kill him if they could lay hands on him' (517a). This reminds the reader

⁴¹ Malcolm (1962, pp. 38-45) considers the connections between the image of the line and the allegory of the cave. He offers a slight modification to what he considers to be the traditional view that the four levels of enlightenment in the cave correspond with the four parts of the line. Morrison (1977, pp. 212-231) considers two unresolved difficulties in the current interpretation of the line and the cave. This leads him to conclude that the line and cave illustrate the place of the sciences in the philosophical education of the guardians.

⁴² Wilberding (2004, pp. 120-121) observes that this breaks with what he considers to be the orthodox view which is that the puppeteers and not the prisoners in the cave represent the politicians in contemporary society. Strang (1986, p. 29) also notes some connections between the prisoners in the cave and the contemporary politicians. He argues that the competition for honours among the prisoners in the cave represents the politicians competing for power in contemporary society. Both these examples alert the reader to the lack of understanding that the prisoners in the cave would have about what is really good.

⁴³ Cooke (1999, p. 43) asserts that the allegory of the cave provides a description of the moral and intellectual development of the guardian which results in the guardian being transformed into a higher moral state.

of the death of the real Socrates and also the treatment of the philosopher by contemporary society as considered in section 2 of this chapter.

Socrates alerts the reader and audience to the fact that the guardians in the ideal state would be compelled to take their turn in ruling, for the good of the state overall. He reminds us that the ideal state would be set up for the good of all three classes rather than the good of any particular class (519d-e). Socrates notes that the state would benefit from the fact that, unlike the contemporary politicians, the guardians would be reluctant to rule. He observes that 'the state whose prospective rulers come to their duties with least enthusiasm is bound to have the best and most tranquil government, and the state whose rulers are eager to rule the worst' (520d).⁴⁴

There is an important difference between the returned prisoner to the cave and the guardian taking his or her turn to rule which Socrates does not consider and the respondents do not raise. In my view, it is likely that the returned prisoner would want to persuade the prisoners that they are seeing shadows rather than the objects themselves. Also, if he could, he would want to help them to escape from the cave, in due course. He would have nothing to gain from leaving them in their ignorance. Indeed, Socrates states that the escaped prisoner would feel sorry for the prisoners back in the cave (516c). However, the guardians in the ideal state would not seek to enable the workers and auxiliaries to escape from their classes through education or any other means.⁴⁵ The guardian rulers would seek to maintain the tripartite state. They would live separate lives in separate quarters to the workers in the ideal state. This is unlike the returned prisoner who would live in the cave with the prisoners. Another interesting difference is that the prisoner that escaped had to be 'forcibly dragged up the steep and rugged ascent and not let go till he had been dragged out into the sunlight, the process would be a painful one' (515e-516a). In comparison with this, the guardians would not need any encouragement to engage in the contemplation of the Forms. Indeed, the guardian would have to be forced to take his or her turn in ruling the state.

⁴⁴ Kraut (1999, p. 248) observes that, in taking their turn in ruling the state, the guardian rulers would be given the opportunity to imitate the Forms. It is worth noting that Socrates first raises the issue of the guardians being compelled to rule for the good of the state in the elenchus exchange in Book I, 347b.

⁴⁵ Socrates' response to this comment would be that in the ideal state people would be placed naturally where they fitted and that education would not help the workers.

This can be compared with a passage in *The Clouds* by Aristophanes where one of Socrates' students comes out as Strepsiades is burning down the philosophers' house. At this point we are told that the student 'is white as a sheet, with enormous eyes', as if he had never seen the daylight (*The Clouds*, 1485-1505).⁴⁶ This is the opposite to what happens in Plato's cave allegory. In *The Clouds*, the philosopher comes out of the house and into the daylight. Whilst, in Plato's cave allegory, the ignorant prisoner escapes into the daylight and the guardian rulers who possess knowledge of the Form of the Good and the other Forms are required to go into the cave and out of the daylight.⁴⁷

In the illustrations of the Sun, Line and Cave, Socrates is again showing signs of hesitation and uncertainty. This is because, understandably, he is only able to provide simile, image and allegory rather than a description of the Form of the Good itself. As a result of this, the core metaphysics of the *Republic* is backed up by simile, image and allegory rather than fact. Socrates and the respondents do not have the knowledge that the philosophers in the ideal state would need to possess. The message emerging here seems to point to our limited ability to gain knowledge of the Form of the Good and the other Forms, without the education and experience of the guardians.

(Section 4)

Wider issues concerning the interruption from Adeimantus in early Book VI and in particular how this relates to the *Republic* overall

In section 1 of this chapter, it was noted that Socrates and the respondents advance theories in some parts of the *Republic* which they reject or revise later in the dialogue. A number of examples of this can be found in the dialectic enquiry, from *Republic*, 368a onwards. In Book IV, they argue for the establishment of the tripartite city, which is justified on the basis of the tripartite soul. However, in Books VIII and IX they consider the gradual decline of the ideal state into a tyranny.⁴⁸ Then, at the end of Book IX, Socrates and the respondents express doubt as to whether the ideal state

⁴⁶ Sommerstein 1973, p. 173.

⁴⁷ At 518a, *Republic* Book VII, Socrates observes that 'eyes may be unsighted in two ways, by a transition either from light to darkness or from darkness to light' and that the same thing applies to the mind.

⁴⁸ Consideration is given to the tripartite state and soul and also to imperfect states and souls in chapter 3 of this study.

could ever exist on earth (592a-b).

Significantly, in Book I, Thrasymachus argued in support of the tyrant and tyranny, which it subsequently appears that the ideal state would inevitably decline into. How is the reader and audience supposed to interpret this development in the *Republic*? Importantly, this contradicts what Socrates and the respondents agreed in Book VI where Socrates asserted that 'The conclusion seems to be that our proposed legislation, if put into effect, would be the ideal, and that to put it into effect, though difficult, would not be impossible' (502c). In response to this, Adeimantus said 'That is our conclusion' (502c).

The reader is left confused as to why Socrates and the respondents have been satisfied to put forward an ideal state that would only be sustainable in the short-term. Perhaps this was the best that they could achieve in the present enquiry and they would need to revisit this issue at a later discussion. Another possibility is that, once the ideal state was implemented, the guardians might be able to find a way of dealing with the sustainability issues that Socrates raised in *Republic* Books VIII and IX. But, unfortunately, this would be some time in the future. This leaves the reader uncertain about whether the ideal state, as outlined in Book IV, could ever become a reality. It also alerts the reader to the enduring strength of the arguments advanced by Thrasymachus in *Republic* Book I.⁴⁹

Another example where Socrates and the respondents seem to be advancing contradictory theories can be found in *Republic* Book V where Socrates and the respondents agree that there would be male and female guardians in the ideal state. However, during the course of the enquiry in Book V, it becomes apparent to the reader that very few women would become guardians.⁵⁰ This leaves the reader in doubt as to why Plato, through the character Socrates, made the point that women could aspire to become guardians in the first place. Another example can be found in *Republic* Book II, 369a-372e, where Socrates puts forward the case for a basic form of society which he claims to be the 'true one' (372e). Nevertheless, Socrates and the respondents reject this later in favour of the ideal state as considered in Book IV.

⁴⁹ The theories advanced by Thrasymachus in *Republic* Book I are considered in chapter 1 of this enquiry where it is argued that Thrasymachus has not been fully defeated by Socrates in the *Republic* as a whole.

⁵⁰ This issue is discussed in chapter 4 of this study.

Notably, this change in direction is prompted by an interruption from Glaucon where he complains about the basic form of society that Socrates is advancing. Glaucon argues 'that's just the fodder you would provide if you were founding a community of pigs' (372d).

Socrates' use of illustration in Books VI and VII, as discussed in the earlier sections of this chapter, builds upon the use of illustration since the enquiry began. Examples of this include the passage in Book I where Socrates describes Thrasymachus as being like a 'wild beast' (336b), the story of Gyges' ring as outlined by Glaucon in Book II (359c-360d), and the illustration of Leontius looking at dead bodies in Book IV (439e-440a). The illustrations in *Republic* Books VI and VII also prepare the reader and audience for the images found later in the dialogue. Examples of these include the image of the many headed beast in Book IX (588c-e), and, importantly, the myth of Er as advanced by Socrates in Book X (613e-616a). The use of illustration in the *Republic* helps to give the wide-ranging work a sense of coherence.⁵¹

Nevertheless, the use of illustration in the *Republic* can also make it difficult for the reader and audience to distinguish between fact and fiction with regard to the theories being outlined by Socrates and the respondents. Socrates uses this to his advantage at some points in the dialogue. An example of this is the simile of the sun. It is important to note that although this is introduced as a simile and Socrates admits that he cannot provide a description of the Form of the Good itself, he assumes the existence of the Form of the Good in the remainder of the dialogue and the respondents do not object to this assumption.⁵²

By Book VII of the *Republic*, the reader is left confused as to which method of enquiry Plato is promoting. During the course of the discussion so far, Socrates and the respondents have adopted three methods of enquiry, elenchus, display oration and dialectic. However, all three methods have proved to be problematic and they have not succeeded in providing a definitive answer to the challenge posed by Adeimantus in Book II, part 1. Adeimantus had challenged Socrates to 'Prove to us therefore, not only that justice is superior to injustice, but that, irrespective of whether

⁵¹ Rutherford 1995, p. 216.

⁵² Annas (1997, p. 145) observes that Socrates and the respondents do not provide sufficient detail concerning the Forms before the Form of the Good is introduced in *Republic* Book VI. This leads her to accuse Plato, through the character Socrates, of assuming that the good is the Form of the Good.

gods or men know it or not, one is good and the other evil because of its inherent effects on its possessor' (367e). The elenchus exchanges in Book I ended with no firm conclusions being reached concerning the nature of justice. In Book II, Glaucon and Adeimantus adopted the display oration method to put forward convincing arguments in favour of the unjust life. However, it becomes apparent to the reader that Glaucon and Adeimantus do not agree with these theories.

The change to the dialectic method of enquiry at 368a, Book II, enabled Socrates and the respondents to advance positive theories concerning the just state and soul. Nevertheless, as discussed above, there are some problems associated with the dialectic method of enquiry which put doubt on the theories being advanced. Another ongoing concern with regard to the dialectic method of enquiry is the long periods when Glaucon and Adeimantus remain fairly silent.⁵³ Importantly, there appears to be a limit to what Socrates and the respondents can achieve in the dialectic exchange in the *Republic*, due to the abstract nature of the subjects that they are enquiring into. Socrates acknowledges this when they are discussing the dialectic method in Book VII. Socrates says to Glaucon 'you won't be able to follow me further, not because of any unwillingness on my part, but because what you'd see would no longer be an image of what we are talking about but the truth itself, that is, as I see it; one ought not at this point to claim certainty, though one can claim that there is something of the kind to see, don't you think' (533a).

Conclusion

In section 1 of this chapter, consideration was given to the interruption from Adeimantus at 487b and on the initial response to this from Socrates. In particular, the reader was surprised with the reaction from Socrates to this interruption, where he agreed with Adeimantus that philosophers are useless members of society. Section 2 looked at the defence of the philosopher as outlined by Socrates. This gave Socrates an opportunity to discuss the level of knowledge that the philosopher would possess, as opposed to the contemporary political leaders. He also provided an explanation as to why the philosophers in contemporary society should not be

⁵³ As discussed in the typology of key respondents in the introductory chapter of this study, at some of the points in the dialogue when the respondents remain silent for extended periods of time, the reader feels the need to take on the role of the respondent and to question the theories being outlined and what message Plato is trying to convey.

blamed for their current predicament. Section 3 considered the simile of the sun, the image of the line and the allegory of the cave. This brought to light Socrates' reliance on the use of illustration to provide an account of the Form of the Good. Section 4 focused on some wider issues concerning the interruption from Adeimantus in early Book VI and how this related to the *Republic* overall. This alerted the reader to a number of problems associated with the dialectic method of enquiry.

The interruption from Adeimantus at 487b, together with Glaucon's reaction to 'wave three' at 473e-474a, had a strong impact on the enquiry. This forced Socrates to provide further justification for the thesis that philosophers should be put in charge in the ideal state. The three waves in Book V give the impression of Socrates and the respondents swimming together to survive each wave. Indeed, this appears to be a metaphor for the dialectic method of enquiry in the *Republic*. It would seem that each time Socrates and the respondents advance positive theories in the enquiry, they are put in a situation where it becomes necessary for them to give further consideration to these theories. This is usually prompted by an interruption from Glaucon or Adeimantus. Here, unlike the elenchus and display oration methods, the dialectic method of enquiry is being portrayed as a co-operative method. However, the dialectic method of enquiry in Books VI and VII is resulting in a number of unsubstantiated theories being advanced by Socrates, for example, the existence of the Form of the Good. The reader is left unconvinced that Glaucon and Adeimantus are in full agreement with Socrates concerning these theories.

At the end of the section of the *Republic* discussed in this chapter, the reader is left with the impression that Plato did not expect the reader to be fully convinced of the theories outlined by Socrates and the respondents. Nevertheless, Plato has given an impressive defence of the philosopher and of philosophy.

Conclusion

One could spend a lifetime studying the *Republic* and the other works of Plato and still only gain a tiny grasp of what Plato was attempting to achieve in writing these works. I have chosen the title of this study deliberately to highlight the fact that, although the reader feels that he or she is engaging directly with the respondents in the *Republic*, one is really engaging with the author Plato who has created these lifelike characters.

This study has attempted to gain an insight into what message or messages Plato may have wished to convey in the discussions between Socrates and the respondents in the *Republic* and Socrates' response to the interruptions from the respondents. That is, if assuming a 'message' is the correct way to approach the *Republic*. I acknowledge that it is not possible to determine with certainty what Plato wished to communicate, due to the complex nature of his style of presentation and the fact that he does not feature in the dialogues. However, through a detailed study of the *Republic*, I have attempted to gain a deeper understanding of this work and have put forward some observations concerning what Plato may have wished to convey to the reader. I have also attempted to question in detail the widely held view that the major significance of Socrates' respondents ends with Book I.

While it would have been interesting to carry out a detailed commentary on each of the Books of the *Republic*, this was not the purpose of this enquiry. It would also have been beyond the scope of this study. In this enquiry, I have focused on Book I, early Book II, and Books IV, V, VI and VII of the *Republic*. This is because these Books contain the most significant input from the respondents and the respondents play a more dramatic role in these Books. However, this is not to suggest that the issues discussed by Socrates and the respondents in the other Books of the *Republic* and in particular Book II, 368a onwards, Books III, VIII and IX are of less importance. In Books II and III Socrates advances controversial theories concerning the censorship of poetry in the ideal state. In Books VIII and IX Socrates describes the deterioration of the ideal state and soul.

The *Republic* is a complex work to study. Plato adopts three methods of enquiry: elenchus, display oration and dialectic. The work is presented in dialogue form. Plato also makes use of story, image and myth in the course of the *Republic*. The dialogue

covers a wide range of topics including: morality, social structure, education, the nature of reality and politics in the overall enquiry into a just state and just soul. Book I ends in *aporia* or deadlock, following a heated elenchus exchange between Thrasymachus and Socrates with Thrasymachus speaking out in favour of injustice and Socrates defending justice. In early Book II, Glaucon and Adeimantus are depicted as devil's advocates providing speeches which favour injustice and they challenge Socrates to advance a positive theory of justice.

In the dialectic method of enquiry from Book II, 368a onwards, the respondents Glaucon and Adeimantus continue to play an important role. In this part of the *Republic*, Socrates provides positive theories, with the support of the respondents, only for some of these theories to be undermined later in the dialogue. The respondents play a key role in raising problems concerning these theories and in forcing Socrates to provide further detail concerning some of these issues.

For example, in Book IV, Socrates puts forward the tripartite state and soul. However, in Books VIII and IX Socrates gives a detailed account of the deterioration of the ideal state into a tyranny. The discussion of the deterioration of the ideal state is prompted by Glaucon at the beginning of Book VIII, 543c-544b, where he notes that Socrates had raised this issue at the end of Book IV but then moved on to discuss the issue of women and the family in the ideal state. At the end of Book IX, 592a-b, Socrates and Glaucon speculate on whether the ideal state would be possible and whether its deterioration would be inevitable.

At the beginning of Book V, 449b-450a, Adeimantus interrupts and insists that Socrates provide more detail concerning women and the family in the ideal state. This is an issue that Socrates had tried to avoid. This results in Socrates changing the direction of the enquiry and giving a detailed account of women and the family in the guardian and auxiliary classes, which takes up most of Book V.

In early Book VI, 487b-d, there is a dramatic interruption from Adeimantus in which he appears to criticise the method of enquiry adopted by Socrates in the *Republic*. He also criticises the philosophers in contemporary society. Adeimantus proceeds to observe that the majority of philosophers are useless members of society. This is in response to Socrates' assertion at 473d that philosophers should rule in the ideal

state. This interruption from Adeimantus results in Socrates providing a detailed defence of the philosopher and the knowledge that the philosopher ruler would aspire to gain in the ideal state, which continues to the end of Book VII.

These interruptions from Glaucon and Adeimantus alert the reader to considerable practical problems associated with the theories advanced by Socrates in the dialectic enquiry in the *Republic*. The reader's concern is increased by the doubt in his ability that Socrates expresses at regular intervals, sometimes ironically, in the dialogue. It is not always easy to interpret whether Plato intends Socrates to be ironic or not. This is a complicated way for Plato to present theories to the reader. It can leave readers confused as to whether Plato expected them to be convinced of the theories provided by Socrates in the dialectic enquiry and also whether Plato fully supported these theories.

Another complication is that in the dialectic method of enquiry the input from the respondents is not distributed evenly. In some Books of the *Republic* they make dramatic entries whilst in other Books they remain fairly silent as 'yes men' for extended periods of time and in particular Books II, III, VIII and IX. It is difficult for the modern reader to understand why the respondents are depicted as being more upset about the issue of women and the family, as raised in Book V, and the other issues raised by the respondents, than the censorship of poetry in the ideal state, as discussed by Socrates in Books II, III and X. All these issues seem controversial to the contemporary reader, although it may have been different for readers in Plato's time. For example, ancient perceptions of the meaning and significance of poetry and art may have been very different from our modern ideas.

One theory may be that the enquiry is designed in this way to encourage the reader to take on the role of the respondent at the points in the dialogue when the respondents remain fairly silent and to reflect upon the theories being advanced by Socrates. Another possible explanation is that the issues raised by the respondents as noted above are more fundamental to the establishment of the ideal state than the censorship of poetry and that this is why the respondents pick up Socrates on these matters. Also, there may be a cumulative effect being dramatised up to the beginning of Book VIII of the *Republic* with the respondents' concern about what is being put forward by Socrates overall building up in the course of the dialectic

enquiry.

Significantly, if the respondents were to interrupt constantly in the enquiry, it would not be possible for Socrates to advance any substantial theories. A weakness of the elenchus exchanges in Book I was that they did not enable Socrates to advance any positive theories concerning justice. However, an opposite weakness of the dialectic method of enquiry from Book II, 368a onwards, is that it does not allow for continual opposition from the respondents.

A further confusion with the dialectic enquiry is that despite the lengthy discussion of the deterioration of the ideal state and soul in Books VIII and IX, which ends with Socrates and Glaucon admitting that the ideal state would not become a reality on earth (592a-b), Socrates proceeds to enquire into the theory of Art in Book X and he appears to assume the existence of the ideal state. He also assumes the existence of the theory of the Forms, which had not been fully established in the dialectic enquiry as, understandably, Socrates was only able to provide a description of the Child of the Good rather than the Form of the Good itself (507a-509c). So, in the end, the *Republic* raises as many questions as it answers for the reader.

A. What I claim to have shown in my study

1. That the view held by many commentators, as stated in the introductory chapter, that after Book I of the *Republic* the respondents cease to be active and become simply 'yes men' does not present a complete picture of what is happening in the dialogue. While there are clear distinctions between Book I and early Book II and the rest of the *Republic* in terms of dramatic structure and behaviour of the respondents, it is demonstrable that the respondents remain important both philosophically and dramatically.

2. That the philosophical and dramatic role of the respondents cannot really be separated. Examples of this include:

i. Plato staging a dramatic link between breakdown in Book I, assertive respondents Polemarchus and Thrasymachus, early Book II, speeches by Glaucon and Adeimantus and Book II, 368a onwards, Socrates' attempt to answer. Arguably this

represents Plato exploring the issues.

- ii. Decisive interventions from Adeimantus and Glaucon in Books V, VI and VIII, as outlined above. These occur at crucial points in the philosophical argument and underline particular philosophical difficulties.
- iii. Major images and Myth of Er; Socrates anticipating problems in reception of ideas by the respondents, by using images and in the case of the Sun/Form of the Good and Myth of Er, unable to express these theories in any other way.

So this much is clear - that the thread of argument in the *Republic* is far from straightforward and linear, and the respondents are to a major extent responsible for or a reflection of this.

B. So what might be the overall significance of the role given to the respondents by Plato in the context of his own composition? This section is by its nature more speculative than section A above.

1. Simple ornamentation. Self-evidently not the case as discussed in A above.
2. Gaining and maintaining the attention of the reader and listener. Perhaps the audience is to be encouraged to identify with the respondents, that is, the dramatic structure is essentially a teaching device, encouraging the audience to identify their problems with those stated by the respondents. There does appear to be something in this but the interruptions from the respondents are not evenly spread throughout the dialectic enquiry.
3. Plato working things out in his own mind; so the problems are not just those of his less expert audience in understanding but also perhaps his own problems as well. The interruptions from Glaucon and Adeimantus as noted above are important for this as they raise problems concerning the theories being advanced and at points change the direction of the enquiry.
4. The dramatic structure and the role of the respondents suggest that Plato is consciously expressing his own doubt about the ideas expressed, that is,

problematizing. We are not necessarily to assume that he has finally worked things out and for him the problems remain ongoing. Notably, at the end of Book IX, 592a-b, Socrates admits that the ideal state is unlikely ever to exist on earth.

5. Whilst, 4 above is a possibility, in my view the answer lies somewhere between 3 and 4, rather than 2. While the interruptions from Glaucon and Adeimantus in the dialectic enquiry and the expressions of hesitation and doubt by Socrates might reflect Plato himself, we cannot be sure that this is always the case. I do see the respondents and Socrates' reaction to them as reflecting something in Plato's actual thought-process, rather than Plato simply using Glaucon and Adeimantus as a 'teaching device'.

Plato's unique style of presentation has made it difficult for scholars in the past and present to gain a clear understanding of Plato and his dialogues. Indeed, Aristotle, in his *Poetics* (2, 1447b11), notes the difficulty of categorising the style of presentation adopted by the writers of Socratic dialogues, including Plato. In particular, it is hard to determine what message Plato seeks to convey in his works, or according to some, whether he intended to put forward a message at all. Importantly, despite the unique challenges of interpretation associated with the works of Plato, the *Republic* and Plato's other works remain relevant to and capture the interest of the modern day reader in the same way that they have engaged numerous scholars in the past.

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